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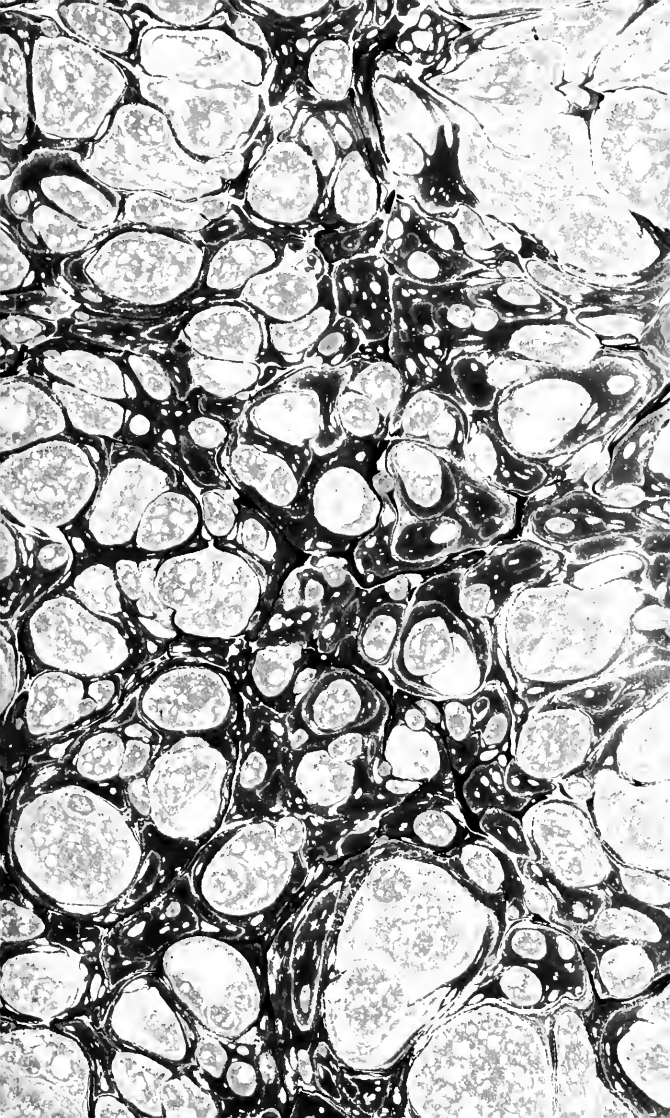


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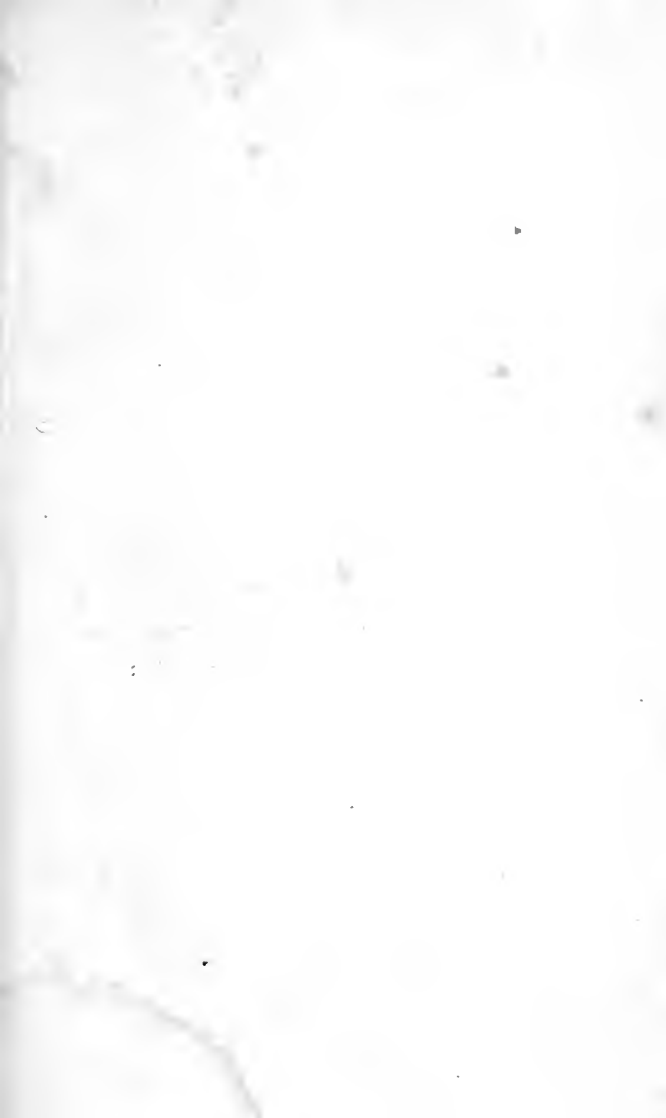
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THE
BRITISH POETS.

One Hundred Volumes.

VOL. LXXI.



THE
BRITISH POETS.

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TRANSLATIONS.

IN ONE HUNDRED VOLUMES.

LXXI.

JENYNS. WILKIE. GRÆME.

CHISWICK:

Printed by C. Whittingham,
COLLEGE HOUSE;

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THE

POEMS

OF

JENYNS, WILKIE, AND GRÆME.



Chiswick:

FROM THE PRESS OF C. WHITTINGHAM,
COLLEGE HOUSE.

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THE
POEMS
OF
Soame Jenyns.



THE
LIFE OF SOAME JENYNS.

BY
R. A. DAVENPORT, Esq.

THE family of Soame Jenyns, on the side of both father and mother, was ancient and respectable. The original seat of his paternal line was Churchill, in Somersetshire; but a younger branch, from which he sprung, settled in Cambridgeshire, in the seventeenth century, and became of considerable consequence in that county. His father, Sir Roger Jenyns, who resided at Ely, was respected as an active magistrate and a loyal man, and was, therefore, knighted by king William: the dignity of knight-hood not being then degraded into a mere bauble, to gratify the vanity of suddenly acquired wealth, or to repay the despicable labours of subservience and venality. His mother was one of the daughters of Sir Peter Soame, Bart. of Hayden in Essex; a woman who joined to the beauties of person the valuable and lasting charms of polished manners, an excellent understanding, and a mind more assiduously cultivated by reading than was usually the case with the ladies of that period.

Soame Jenyns was born in Great Ormond Street, London, at midnight, in the year 1703-4. The time of

his birth took place so exactly at the moment when the old year ends and the new begins, that it could not be ascertained to which year it belonged. This being the case, he pleasantly declared that he considered himself at liberty to choose his birthday, and he accordingly made choice of 'New Year's day, which in all civilized countries was considered as a day of general festivity.'

During his childhood, he imbibed from his mother the rudiments of knowledge, and the principles of virtue; so that, when he came to an age to be put under the care of a tutor, he was well prepared to pursue his studies with advantage. His education, however, still continued to be domestic. The first preceptor to whom he was intrusted was the Rev. Mr. Hill, who was succeeded by the Rev. Stephen White. By the latter gentleman he was qualified for the University. It is said, to the credit of Jenyns, that, unstimulated as he had been by rivalry, he nevertheless 'left behind him exercises in English, and in both the dead languages, whence at that time the heights might have been easily foreseen, to which his understanding would afterwards attain.'

His father having removed to Bottisham, or Bolsham Hall, in the village of the same name, about six miles from Cambridge, Jenyns was sent to the neighbouring university, and entered as a fellow commoner of St. John's College, of which Dr. Edmondson was one of the principal tutors. There he continued to follow up his studies, with laudable diligence and with great regularity of conduct, for nearly three years; and so congenial to his feelings was a college life, that he ever afterwards used to number among the happiest of his existence those days which he had spent at college.

Those days were perhaps endeared to him by contrast with the days which succeeded them. He quitted the university without taking a degree, and it

is believed that he did so in consequence of his early marriage. The person to whom he was united was the natural daughter of his maternal uncle, Colonel Soame, of Dereham Grange, in Norfolk. Whether she was the object of his own choice is not known. If she were, the result proved that he had not yet acquired the power of choosing wisely. She brought him an accession of fortune, but he dearly paid for it by the loss of comfort. After they had lived together some years, she eloped with a Leicestershire gentleman; a separation from her husband ensued; and he consented to allow her a maintenance, which she received till her decease, in 1753. Six months after the death of the disturber of his peace, he married Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry Grey, Esq. of Hackney, in Middlesex. At the time of his second marriage he was forty-nine, and his wife was three years older. It is probable, therefore, that this match, in which ardent passion could have no share, arose out of the reciprocal confidence inspired by long-trying friendship, and there is reason to believe that it was productive of felicity.

Notwithstanding his marriage, it appears that, after he left Cambridge, he continued, for several years, to reside with his father; his summers being spent in the country, and his winters in London. Among his amusements literature held the foremost place. There can be little doubt that he had early tried his powers in verse; for some of his lighter pieces bear the stamp of an age when the spirits are buoyant, and the passions are warm. It was not, however, till the year 1730 that he came forward in the character of an author; and even then he concealed his name, though fruitlessly, as it was soon discovered. His first published poem was 'The Art of Dancing,' which he inscribed to the beautiful and accomplished Lady Fanny Fielding, the youngest daughter of the Earl of Denbigh, and subsequently

Countess of Winchelsea. It was recommended by a graceful sprightliness and ease of style and sentiment, and the public considered it as a proof that much might be expected from the writer. In 1735, appeared his 'Epistle to Lord Lovelace, written in the Country,' which sparkles with wit, and is a happy specimen of his skill in ludicrous description.

His entrance into what may strictly be called public life took place in 1742, soon after the death of his father; when, at the general election, he was chosen one of the representatives for the county of Cambridge. From that time till the year 1780 he continued, with one exception, to hold a seat, either for that county or the borough of the same name. The exception occurred in 1754, when he sat for the borough of Dunwich. As soon, however, as a vacancy was made, by the removal of Lord Dupplin to the House of Peers, Soame Jenyns was again returned as a member for the town of Cambridge.

In the system by which his parliamentary conduct appears to have been regulated, there is nothing to praise. When he first entered the senate, the powerful opposition of that day were making their final, and at length successful, efforts to wrest from Sir Robert Walpole the reins of government. Jenyns was a constant witness of the fierce struggles between the two parties, but he was a silent one, for, like many other men of talent, he did not possess the gift of oral eloquence. His vote, and whatever influence he could command, he threw into the scale of the minister; and when Sir Robert was at last driven out of office into a peerage, he visited and congratulated him, 'on his having received so gracious a mark of what he had deserved for his unwearying zeal and abilities in the long service of his country.'

Thus far he is not amenable to censure. In his support of a falling minister we may even admire his

generosity; nor does it afford any impeachment of his understanding; as Sir Robert Walpole, though some of his measures were objectionable, possessed in an eminent degree many of the talents which are required to form a statesman, and was acknowledged to be of an amiable character in private life. But Jenyns did not stop here. He appears to have transferred his allegiance from one minister to another, with the same readiness with which subjects transfer theirs from a deceased to a living sovereign. In the long course of eight and thirty years, during which he sat in parliament, he was always to be found arrayed on the side of the men who were the holders of office. No vote of his ever breathed a doubt of their competency, or of the wisdom of any one of their proceedings. He acted as though he believed that the Thibetian fable respecting the Grand Lama were realized in England, and that each new minister was animated by the transmitted soul of his predecessor; another, yet still the same; a different being in body, but not in mind.

To attribute to venality this unvarying attachment to all ministers would, however, be unjust. He was a man of integrity, and does not seem to have been eager to grasp at either money or power. One place, indeed, he held, that of a Commissioner of the Board of Trade, which was given to him in 1755, and which he retained till the board itself was crushed by the thunderbolt of Burke's eloquence. But it would be too much to suppose that the emolument which he derived from it had any influence with a man of his fortune and feelings. Nor can we find a clue to his conduct in the circumstance which his friend and biographer, Mr. Cole, considers as capable of affording one, namely, that he was well acquainted with the motives which prompted, and with the means which were employed by, the enemies of Sir Robert Walpole, and that this knowledge 'gave

him an early distaste to oppositions in general.' It is to his singular opinions that we must look for the cause of his singular pertinacity in voting with every ministry. He contended that all government is the offspring of violence and corruption, and can be supported by no other methods than those by which it was first established; that men would never submit to each other merely for the sake of public utility, too remote a benefit to make any impression on the dull senses of the multitude, but must be always beaten or bribed into obedience; that no government can be administered without in some degree deceiving the people, oppressing the mean, indulging the great, corrupting the venal, opposing factions to each other, and temporizing with parties; that, of course, nothing is to be expected from a disinterested love of country, such a love being an idle chimera; and that the loudest advocates of liberty are knaves at heart, and will ever prove to be the worst of tyrants; from all which it follows, as an inevitable consequence, that it is not of the slightest import to whose hands the rule of an empire is confided, and that, as no amendment can be produced, it is absurd to assist in bringing about a change, and no less absurd to lament that change when it is at length accomplished.

Doctrines like these are degrading and noxious to human nature. Were they to obtain general currency among that class of society whose duty it is to protect the rights of their fellow citizens, the earth would swarm with abuses, oppression would mercilessly trample on the poor, and revolution would be the sole remedy for insufferable wrongs. Such doctrines are usually taught by the profligate and the cruel, who hope to profit from them; but Jenyns was neither profligate nor cruel; he was, on the contrary, a virtuous man, and more averse than most mortals from inflicting upon his fellow creatures any species

of pain. But his mind was so strangely constituted that it did not merely delight in paradoxes and sophisms; it even mistook them for obvious truths and solid arguments. In some rare instances, persons have been found, whose perception of colours was so imperfect and delusive that scarlet and green appeared to them to have no difference of hue. The mental sight of Jenyns, if we may judge from his writings, apparently laboured under a similar defect.

It was in the periodical paper called 'The World,' to which he contributed five essays, that he was first known as a writer of prose. From these essays, however, it is evident that he had formed his taste in prose composition on the purest models, and that he had also acquired an entire freedom of expression. His style, and here I speak with reference to all his works, is copious without being feeble, and brilliant without being affected; it is never debased by vulgarisms, nor clouded by obscurity, nor does it defeat its purpose by betraying to the reader that it is the produce of elaborate and painful effort. In some parts of these papers his love of paradox peeps out; especially in the hundred and forty-third number, where he brings forward the theory of a preexistent state, which theory he afterwards strenuously advocated in his *Origin of Evil*, and in his third *Disquisition*.

His next work was an ironical tract, written at the period when, both within and without the walls of the Parliament, the establishment of a militia was warmly debated. It is called 'Short but Serious Reasons for a National Militia,' and was probably written in 1756, though Mr. Cole assigns the following year as the date of it. Whether it was published I cannot say, but I imagine that it was. Among his many strange opinions, Jenyns had that of believing that those who have an interest in property must be the worst defenders of it, and consequently, that a mercenary force must be the best defence of a nation.

He, therefore, gave his opposition to the plan of setting on foot a militia. As a piece of witty and well supported irony, his tract is excellent; as an argument against the measure in question it has not even the shadow of merit.

With more confidence in his metaphysical abilities than was warrantable, he now undertook to solve a moral problem, which in all ages has astonished and perplexed the wisest and most learned of mankind, who, in reasoning upon it, have still been baffled, and ‘found no end, in wandering mazes lost.’ In 1757 he published, in six letters, ‘A Free Inquiry into the Nature and Origin of Evil;’ and he flattered himself that he had fully reconciled the existence of evil with the goodness of the Deity! His style was admired, and it deserves to be so; but there is little else that can lay claim to praise. Much of his work consists of a mere expansion of half a line from Pope, ‘whatever is, is right,’ supported by an assertion that the Creator was impotent to prevent evil from existing, and could only modify its action. I know of no English author who is more often guilty of the two illogical faults of begging the question, and of reasoning in a circle. He likewise deals in such startling paradoxes, and now and then uses language so apparently satirical, that the reader is tempted to imagine himself to have been deceived as to the purport of the volume, and that the writer, under the mask of irony, is, in reality, ridiculing those principles which he pretends to advocate. As an instance of it, may be adduced the following passage, in which, doubtful as the fact may seem to be, Jenyns was perfectly in earnest. After having described the mass of mankind as being destitute of virtue, he adds, ‘peculiar must be the composition of that little creature called a *Great Man*. He must be formed of all kinds of contradictions: he must be indefatigable in business, to fit him for the labours of

his station, and at the same time fond of pleasures, to enable him to attach many to his interests, by a participation of their vices: he must be master of much artifice and knavery, his situation requiring him to employ, and be employed by, so many knaves, yet he must have some honesty, or those very knaves will be unwilling to trust him: he must be possessed of great magnanimity, perpetually to confront surrounding enemies and impending dangers; yet of great meanness, to flatter those enemies, and suffer tamely continual injuries and abuses: he must be wise enough to conduct the great affairs of mankind with sagacity and success, and to acquire riches and honours for his reward; and at the same time foolish enough to think it worth a wise man's while to meddle with such affairs at all, and to accept such imaginary rewards for real sufferings. Since then in all human governments such must be the governors, and such the governed eternally be, it is certain they must be ever big with numberless imperfections, and productive of abundant evils: and it is no less plain that if infinite goodness could not exclude natural and moral evils, infinite power can never prevent political.'

This extraordinary production was not suffered to pass uncriticised. It was answered by various writers. By far the most formidable of its assailants was, however, Dr. Johnson, who was then editor of the *Literary Magazine*, in which magazine he inserted a long and highly finished review of Jenyns's *Letters*. I agree with Mr. Chalmers that this review 'is perhaps the first of Johnson's compositions, for strength of argument, keenness of reply, and brilliancy of wit.' It is equally excellent in reasoning and in diction. Nothing can be more masterly than the manner in which the critic detects the many inconsistencies, and crumbles into dust the sophisms, of the rash metaphysician; nothing can be more poig-

nant, yet more delicate, than the sarcasms which he launches at the system and at the literary pretensions of Jenyns. After having been extensively read in the magazine, this review was printed separately, in a small volume, of which two editions were sold.

The Letters of Jenyns also went through three editions, to one of which he added a preface, explaining his plan, vindicating his intentions, charging his opponents with senseless misapprehensions, malicious misconstructions, and unjust calumnies, and declaring that he saw nothing in his sentiments which ought to be retracted. On a few of the objections which had been urged, he touched lightly; but he does not, in any instance, seem to have obviated them. Against Johnson he always retained as much resentment as his mild nature was capable of feeling; and, after the death of the moralist, when he himself was verging to the grave, he vented that resentment in an epitaph, which has little poetry and some illiberality, to which Boswell retorted by another, which is much more illiberal, and has still less poetry.

With the exception of collecting his poems and six letters into two small octavo volumes, which came from the press in 1761, he does not appear to have made any literary exertion till 1765, when he published 'The Objections to the Taxation of our American Colonies, by the Legislature of Great Britain, briefly considered.' In this pamphlet he, of course, takes part against the Americans. He begins it by arrogantly declaring that the right, and the expediency of exercising the right, of taxing the colonies 'are propositions so indisputably clear that he should never have thought it necessary to undertake their defence, had not many arguments been lately flung out, both in papers and conversation, which, with insolence equal to their absurdity, deny

them both; and, as these are usually mixed up with several patriotic and favourite words, such as liberty, property, Englishmen, &c.; which are apt to make strong impressions on that more numerous part of mankind, who have ears but no understanding, it will not, he thinks, be improper to give them some answers.' He promises that he will be brief; he keeps his word; and this is his sole merit. In his reasoning he is as feeble as he is dogmatical in his style. He asserts everything, but proves nothing; and it is curious that he did not perceive the use which might be made, and soon was made, of his only argument, that Englishmen are taxed without their consent, whence he draws the conclusion that Americans also ought to submit to be taxed in the same manner. He was not aware how soon those whom he charged with insolence and absurdity would reply to him, that the very circumstance which he brought forward as an argument was a flagrant abuse, and that it would be more wise and more just to reform it at home than to extend its influence to our colonial possessions.

In 1767, he sent to the press a short pamphlet, which shows that he had not inattentively studied some branches of political economy. It is entitled 'Thoughts on the Cause and Consequences of the present high Price of Provisions.' The high price had been traced to a variety of visionary causes, by preceding writers, all of whom he pronounces to have been prompted by ignorance or malevolence. He asserts it to 'arise principally from two sources; the increase of our national debt, and the increase of our riches; that is, from the poverty of the public, and the wealth of private individuals.' Though in this tract we occasionally meet with erroneous views, and, with his usual leaning towards paradoxical ideas, it must be owned that his argument is often incon-

trovertible, that he had an accurate notion of what would result from a change in the value of money, and that he clearly saw much of the baneful effect which must be produced by an enormous national debt. Nearly the same may be said with respect to another tract, which he wrote almost twenty years subsequently, and which bears the title of 'Thoughts on the National Debt.'

In the early part of his life Jenyns was among the number of unbelievers, and he is said to have been even fond of making an unreserved avowal of his principles. As, however, he grew older he reflected more deeply on the subject; he studied the Holy Writings with assiduity, and the consequence of his reflection and study was a firm conviction of the divine origin of Christianity.

It is probable that he considered it to be a sacred duty to atone for the injury which he might, perhaps, have formerly done to the cause which he now espoused. In 1776, therefore, when he was in his seventy-second year, he gave to the public 'A View of the internal Evidence of the Christian Religion;' which, if viewed only as a literary work, must be acknowledged to be an astonishing effort for a man of his age. It excited general attention, and at first was highly applauded, especially by the clergy, who imagined that the disinterested testimony of a layman, and that layman a man of talents and once an infidel, could not fail to be productive of beneficial effects. The scene, however, soon changed. It was discovered that many of his opinions were erroneous, and many were paradoxical; that his premises were sometimes false, and that at other times he argued falsely from such as were correct; that he granted concessions of the most dangerous kind, and left openings of which the Deist would take a fatal advantage; and that, at best, he could be looked upon

as nothing better than 'a zealous and spirited volunteer, who had embarked in a vessel surrounded with enemies, and assailed with tempestuous weather, and who began to defend and work the ship, without that experience in the art of navigation, or the science of defence, that was necessary to ensure success and victory.' Those who were most hostile to him did not scruple to hint that he was, in fact, a concealed enemy, and that, while he was affecting to prop the fabric, he was undermining the foundation. This was unjust; for there is no reason whatever to entertain a doubt of his sincerity. The censure was drawn upon him by his propensity to paradox. An amusing instance of this propensity is to be seen in that part of the 'View' where he classes valour, patriotism, and friendship among the spurious virtues: patriotism he had before reprobated, in his 'Origin of Evil.' It is almost needless to say that his objections were grounded on a mere perversion of the words.

This work was answered, or animadverted upon, by many writers. His principal antagonists were Dr. Maclean, in a 'Series of Letters,' and the Rev. Mr. Taylor, in 'A full Answer to a late View.' The controversy at length died away, and the book itself and the replies to it are now almost equally forgotten.

Probably at the moment when, in 1782, the recently formed Whig administration was broken up, by the death of the Marquis of Rockingham, and it seemed difficult to frame another, Jenyns amused himself by writing a laughable piece, which he denominated 'A Scheme for the Coalition of all Parties.' It proves that he had not lost any part of his wit, or of the elegance of his style.

He gave, in the same year, a still more decisive proof of unimpaired mental powers, by publishing his 'Disquisitions on several Subjects.' These 'Dis-

quisitions,' which are in some measure supplementary to the 'Free Inquiry,' are eight in number, and are as full of talent and of fanciful theories as all his former works. On this occasion, also, he had no lack of antagonists. The wittiest of them, and perhaps the one whose attack he most felt, was the author of 'The Heroic Epistle to Sir William Chambers,' who, in a dialogue, entitled 'The Dean and the Squire,' forcibly ridiculed the disquisition of Jenyns 'on government and civil liberty.'

His last work, 'Thoughts on a Parliamentary Reform,' was written in 1784, when there was a loud call for that reform. In this pamphlet he did not appear to advantage. He only repeated erroneous assertions, which he had advanced before, and he repeated them in less seductive language.

Jenyns at length sunk under the pressure of age and infirmities. His death took place at his house in Tilney Street, Audley Square, on the 18th of December, 1787, when he had nearly completed his eighty-fourth year.

As a poet he is not of a high class. His compositions may be read with pleasure by those who can be satisfied with sprightly and ingenious thoughts, an occasional play of wit, and, in general, a propriety of diction. If more be sought for in his poems, the search will end in disappointment.

With respect to his moral and social character, all who knew him unite in their praise of it. His biographer, Mr. Nalson Cole, describes him as a man, kind, benevolent, hospitable, and so averse to give pain or offence that he abhorred even wit when it was converted into an instrument of personal annoyance. The Rev. Mr. Cole of Milton, never sparing of bitterness when he could find an opportunity of exercising it, declares that 'Mr. Jenyns was a man of lively fancy and pleasant turn of wit, very sparkling

in conversation, and full of merry conceits and infinite drollery, which was heightened by his inarticulate manner of speaking through his broken teeth, and all this mixed with the utmost humanity and goodnature, having hardly ever heard him severe upon any one, and by no means satirical in his mirth and good-humour.' Cumberland bears a similar testimony; and one still more solemn is recorded in the following words, in the registry of burials for the parish of Bottisham.

SOAME JENYNS, in the 83d year of his age.

What his literary character was,
The world has already judged for itself;
But it remains for his Parish Minister

to do his duty,

By declaring,

That while he registers the burial of

SOAME JENYNS,

He regrets the loss of one of the most
amiable of men,

And one of the truest Christians.

To the parish of Bottisham he is an
irreparable loss.

He was buried in this church, Dec. 27,
near midnight,

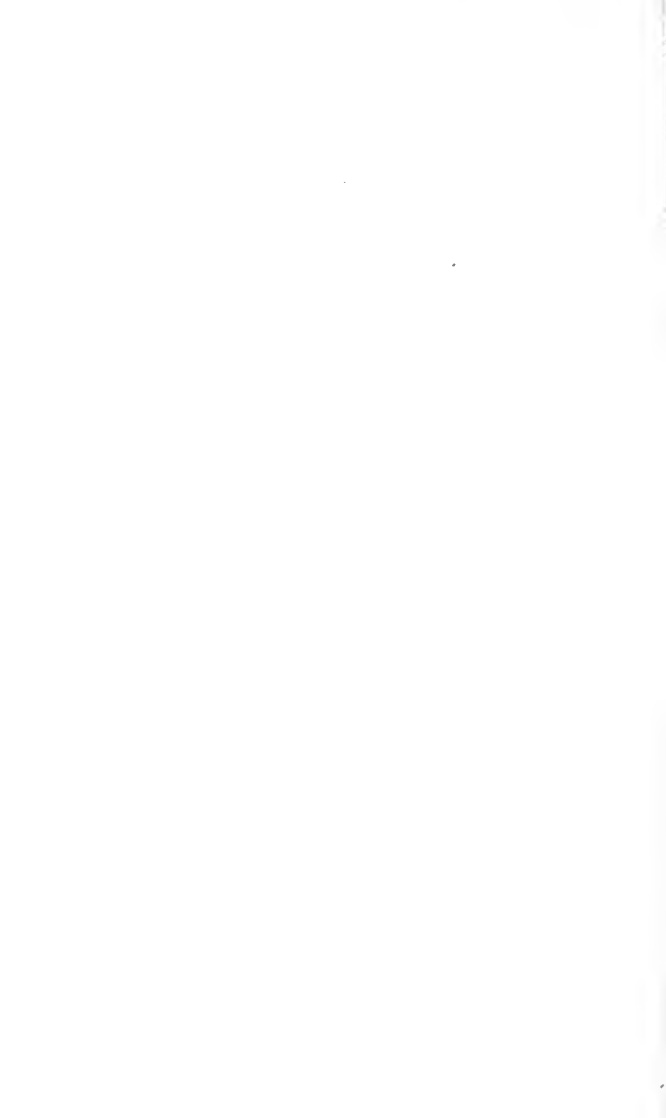
By William Lort Mansell, sequestrator,
Who thus transgresses the common forms
of a Register,

Merely because he thinks it to be
The most solemn and lasting method
of recording to posterity

That the finest understanding

Has been united

To the best heart.



ON THE
IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

Translated from the Latin of
ISAAC HAWKINS BROWNE¹.

BOOK I.

To all inferior animals 'tis given
To' enjoy the state allotted them by Heaven ;
No vain researches e'er disturb their rest,
No fears of dark futurity molest.
Man, only man, solicitous to know
The springs whence Nature's operations flow,

¹ Isaac Hawkins Browne, Esq. the son of the Rev. Mr. Browne, vicar of Burton on Trent, was educated at Westminster school, from whence he went to Trinity College, Cambridge, and afterwards settled in Lincoln's Inn, where he engaged in the profession of the law. In 1759 he published his Poem, *De Animi Immortalitate*, which was universally read, and as universally admired, not only for the choice and arrangement of the matter, but the purity of the language, which Lucretius himself would have acknowledged as a perfect copy of his style. Struck with the arguments, the disposition of those arguments, and the beauty of the expression, but above all with the bright contrast to the obscurity of the metaphysical poets of the last century ; Mr. Jenyns was the first who translated it into English, and whose translation, as it was first in time, was also first in propriety and elegance amongst those with which the public was afterwards favoured.

Plods through a dreary waste with toil and pain,
And reasons, hopes, and thinks, and lives in vain;
For sable Death, still hovering o'er his head,
Cuts short his progress, with his vital thread.
Wherefore, since Nature errs not, do we find
These seeds of science in the human mind,
If no congenial fruits are predesign'd?
For what avails to man this power to roam
Through ages past and ages yet to come,
To' explore new worlds o'er all the' etherial way,
Chain'd to a spot, and living but a day?
Since all must perish in one common grave,
Nor can these long laborious searches save.
Were it not wiser far, supinely laid,
To sport with Phillis in the noontide shade?
Or at thy jovial festivals appear,
Great Bacchus, who alone the soul canst clear
From all that it has felt, and all that it can fear?

Come on then, let us feast: let Chloe sing,
And soft Neæra touch the trembling string;
Enjoy the present hour, nor seek to know
What good or ill to-morrow may bestow.

But these delights soon pall upon the taste;
Let's try then if more serious cannot last:
Wealth let us heap on wealth, or fame pursue,
Let power and glory be our points in view;
In courts, in camps, in senates let us live,
Our levees crowded like the buzzing hive:
Each weak attempt the same sad lesson brings!
Alas, what vanity in human things!

What means then shall we try? where hope to
A friendly harbour for the restless mind? [find
Who still, you see, impatient to obtain
Knowledge immense (so Nature's laws ordain),

E'en now, though fetter'd in corporeal clay,
Climbs step by step the prospect to survey,
And seeks, unwearied, truth's eternal ray.

No fleeting joys she asks, which must depend
On the frail senses, and with them must end;
But such as suit her own immortal frame,
Free from all change, eternally the same.

Take courage then, these joys we shall attain;
Almighty wisdom never acts in vain;
Nor shall the soul on which it has bestow'd
Such powers e'er perish like an earthly clod;
But purged at length from foul corruption's stain,
Freed from her prison and unbound her chain,
She shall her native strength and native skies
regain:

To heaven an old inhabitant return, [t'nal urn.
And draw nectareous streams from truth's perpe-

Whilst life remains (if life it can be call'd
To' exist in fleshly bondage thus enthrall'd),
Tired with the dull pursuit of worldly things,
The soul scarce wakes, or opes her gladsome
Yet still the godlike exile in disgrace [wings,
Retains some marks of her celestial race;
Else whence from memory's store can she produce
Such various thoughts, or range them so for use?
Can matter these contain, dispose, apply?
Can in her cells such mighty treasures lie?
Or can her native force produce them to the eye?

Whence is this power, this foundress of all arts,
Serving, adorning life, through all its parts,
Which names imposed, by letters mark'd those
Adjusted properly by legal claims, [names,
From woods and wilds collected rude mankind,
And cities, laws, and governments design'd?

What can this be but some bright ray from Heaven,
Some emanation from Omniscience given?

When now the rapid stream of eloquence
Bears all before it, passion, reason, sense;
Can its dread thunder, or its lightning's force,
Derive their essence from a mortal source?
What think you of the bard's enchanting art,
Which, whether he attempts to warm the heart
With fabled scenes, or charm the ear with rhyme,
Breathes all pathetic, lovely, and sublime?
Whilst things on earth roll round from age to age,
The same dull farce repeated on the stage;
The poet gives us a creation new,
More pleasing and more perfect than the true:
The mind, who always to perfection hastes,
Perfection, such as here she never tastes,
With gratitude accepts the kind deceit,
And thence foresees a system more complete.

Of those what think you, who the circling race
Of suns, and their revolving planets trace,
And comets journeying through unbounded space?
Say, can you doubt, but that the' all-searching
soul,

That now can traverse heaven from pole to pole,
From thence descending, visits but this earth,
And shall once more regain the regions of her birth?

Could she thus act, unless some power unknown,
From matter quite distinct and all her own,
Supported and impell'd her? She approves,
Self-conscious, and condemns; she hates and
Mourns and rejoices, hopes and is afraid, [loves,
Without the body's unrequested aid:

Her own internal strength her reason guides,
By this she now compares things, now divides;

Truth's scatter'd fragments piece by piece collects,
Rejoins, and thence her edifice erects;
Piles arts on arts, effects to causes ties,
And rears the' aspiring fabric to the skies:
From whence, as on a distant plain below,
She sees from causes consequences flow,
And the whole chain distinctly comprehends,
Which from the' Almighty's throne to earth de-
And, lastly, turning inwardly her eyes, [scends:
Perceives how all her own ideas rise,
Contemplates what she is, and whence she came,
And almost comprehends her own amazing frame.
Can mere machines be with such powers endued,
Or conscious of those powers suppose they could?
For body is but a machine alone
Moved by external force, and impulse not its own.

Rate not the' extension of the human mind
By the plebeian standard of mankind,
But by the size of those gigantic few
Whom Greece and Rome still offer to our view;
Or Britain well deserving equal praise,
Parent of heroes too in better days.

Why should I try her numerous sons to name
By verse, law, eloquence, consign'd to fame?
Or who have forced fair Science into sight,
Long lost in darkness, and afraid of light.
O'er all superior, like the solar ray,
First Bacon usher'd in the dawning day,
And drove the mists of sophistry away;
Pervaded nature with amazing force,
Following experience still throughout his course,
And, finishing at length his destined way,
To Newton he bequeath'd the radiant lamp of day.

Illustrious souls! if any tender cares
Affect angelic breasts for man's affairs,
If in your present happy, heavenly state,
You're not regardless quite of Britain's fate,
Let this degenerate land again be bless'd
With that true vigour which she once possess'd;
Compel us to unfold our slumbering eyes,
And to our ancient dignity to rise.

Such wondrous powers as these must sure be
given

For most important purposes by Heaven;
Who bids these stars as bright examples shine,
Besprinkled thinly by the hand divine,
To form to virtue each degenerate time,
And point out to the soul its origin sublime.

That there's a *self* which after death shall live,
All are concern'd about, and all believe;
That something's ours, when we from life depart,
This all conceive, all feel it at the heart;
The wise of learn'd antiquity proclaim
This truth, the public voice declares the same;
No land so rude but looks beyond the tomb
For future prospects in a world to come.

Hence, without hopes to be in life repaid,
We plant slow oaks posterity to shade;
And hence vast pyramids, aspiring high,
Lift their proud heads aloft, and time defy.

Hence is our love of fame, a love so strong,
We think no dangers great, or labours long,
By which we hope our beings to extend,
And to remotest times in glory to descend.

For fame the wretch beneath the gallows lies,
Disowning every crime for which he dies;

Of life profuse, tenacious of a name,
Fearless of death, and yet afraid of shame.
Nature has wove into the human mind
This anxious care for names we leave behind,
To' extend our narrow views beyond the tomb,
And give an earnest of a life to come:
For if when dead we are but dust or clay,
Why think of what posterity shall say?
Her praise or censure cannot us concern,
Nor ever penetrate the silent urn. [train,

What mean the nodding plumes, the funeral
And marble monument that speaks in vain,
With all those cares which every nation pays
To their unfeeling dead in different ways?
Some in the flower-strewn grave the corpse have
And annual obsequies around it paid, [laid,
As if to please the poor departed shade;
Others on blazing piles the body burn,
And store their ashes in the faithful urn;
But all in one great principle agree,
To give a fancied immortality.

Why should I mention those whose oozy soil
Is render'd fertile by the' o'erflowing Nile,
Their dead they bury not, nor burn with fires,
No graves they dig, erect no funeral pyres;
But washing first the' embowel'd body clean,
Gums, spice, and melted pitch they pour within;
Then with strong fillets bind it round and round,
To make each flaccid part compact and sound;
And lastly paint the varnish'd surface o'er
With the same features which in life it wore:
So strong their presage of a future state,
And that our nobler part survives the body's fate.

Nations behold, remote from reason's beams,
Where Indian Ganges rolls his sandy streams,
Of life impatient rush into the fire,
And willing victims to their gods expire!
Persuaded the loosed soul to regions flies,
Bless'd with eternal spring and cloudless skies.

Nor is less famed the oriental wife
For steadfast virtue and contempt of life:
These heroines mourn not with loud female cries
Their husbands lost, or with o'erflowing eyes;
But, strange to tell! their funeral piles ascend,
And in the same sad flames their sorrows end;
In hopes with them beneath the shades to rove,
And there renew their interrupted love.

In climes where Boreas breathes eternal cold,
See numerous nations, warlike, fierce, and bold,
To battle all unanimously run,
Nor fire, nor sword, nor instant death they shun:
Whence this disdain of life in every breast,
But from a notion on their minds impress'd,
That all who for their country die are bless'd?
Add too to these the once prevailing dreams
Of sweet Elysian groves and Stygian streams:
All show with what consent mankind agree
In the firm hope of immortality.

Grant these the' inventions of the crafty priest,
Yet such inventions never could subsist,
Unless some glimmerings of a future state
Were with the mind coëval and innate:
For every fiction which can long persuade,
In truth must have its first foundations laid.

Because we are unable to conceive
How unembodied souls can act and live,

The vulgar give them forms, and limbs, and faces,
And habitations in peculiar places;
Hence reasoners more refined, but not more wise,
Struck with the glare of such absurdities,
Their whole existence fabulous suspect,
And truth and falsehood in a lump reject;
Too indolent to learn what may be known,
Or else too proud that ignorance to own.
For hard's the task the daubing to pervade
Folly and Fraud on Truth's fair form have laid;
Yet let that task be ours; for great the prize:
Nor let us Truth's celestial charms despise,
Because that priests or poets may disguise.

That there's a God from Nature's voice is clear,
And yet what errors to this truth adhere!
How have the fears and follies of mankind
Now multiplied their gods, and now subjoin'd
To each the frailties of the human mind!
Nay, superstition spread at length so wide,
Beasts, birds, and onions too were deified.

The' Athenian sage, revolving in his mind
This weakness, blindness, madness of mankind,
Foretold, that in maturer days, though late,
When time should ripen the decrees of fate,
Some God would light us, like the rising day,
Through error's maze, and chase these clouds
away.

Long since has time fulfill'd this great decree,
And brought us aid from this Divinity.

Well worth our search discoveries may be made
By Nature, void of this celestial aid:
Let's try what her conjectures then can reach,
Nor scorn plain Reason when she deigns to teach.

That mind and body often sympathize
Is plain; such is this union nature ties:

But then as often too they disagree,
Which proves the soul's superior progeny.
Sometimes the body in full strength we find,
Whilst various ails debilitate the mind ;
At others, whilst the mind its force retains,
The body sinks with sickness and with pains :
Now did one common fate their beings end,
Alike they'd sicken, and alike they'd mend.
But sure experience, on the slightest view,
Shows us that the reverse of this is true ;
For when the body oft expiring lies,
Its limbs quite senseless, and half closed its eyes,
The mind new force and eloquence acquires,
And with prophetic voice the dying lips inspires.

Of like materials were they both composed,
How comes it that the mind, when sleep has closed
Each avenue of sense, expatiates wide,
Her liberty restored, her bonds untied ?
And, like some bird who from its prison flies,
Claps her exulting wings and mounts the skies.

Grant that corporeal is the human mind,
It must have parts *in infinitum* join'd ;
And each of these must will, perceive, design,
And draw confusedly in a different line ;
Which then can claim dominion o'er the rest,
Or stamp the ruling passion in the breast ?

Perhaps the mind is form'd by various arts
Of modeling and figuring these parts ;
Just as if circles wiser were than squares ;
But surely common sense aloud declares
That site and figure are as foreign quite
From mental powers as colours black or white.

Allow that motion is the cause of thought,
With what strange powers must motion then be
fraught !

Reason, sense, science must derive their source
From the wheel's rapid whirl, or pulley's force :
Tops whipp'd by schoolboys sages must com-
mence,

Their hoops, like them, be cudgel'd into sense,
And boiling pots o'erflow with eloquence.

Whence can this very motion take its birth ?
Not sure from matter, from dull clods of earth ;
But from a living spirit lodged within,
Which governs all the bodily machine :
Just as the' Almighty Universal Soul
Informs, directs, and animates the whole.

Cease then to wonder how the' immortal mind
Can live when from the body quite disjoin'd ;
But rather wonder if she e'er could die,
So framed, so fashion'd for eternity ;
Self-moved, not form'd of parts together tied,
Which time can dissipate, and force divide ;
For beings of this make can never die,
Whose powers within themselves and their own
essence lie.

If to conceive how any thing can be
From shape extracted and locality
Is hard ; what think you of the Deity ?
His Being not the least relation bears,
As far as to the human mind appears,
To shape, or size, similitude, or place,
Clothed in no form, and bounded by no space.
Such then is God, a spirit pure, refined
From all material dross, and such the human mind.
For in what part of essence can we see
More certain marks of immortality ?
E'en from this dark confinement with delight
She looks abroad, and prunes herself for flight ;

Like an unwilling inmate longs to roam
From this dull earth, and seek her native home.

Go then, forgetful of its toil and strife,
Pursue the joys of this fallacious life;
Like some poor fly, who lives but for a day,
Sip the fresh dews, and in the sunshine play,
And into nothing then dissolve away.
Are these our great pursuits? is this to live?
These all the hopes this much loved world can give?
How much more worthy envy is their fate,
Who search for truth in a superior state!
Not groping step by step, as we pursue,
And following reason's much entangled clue,
But with one great and instantaneous view.

But how can sense remain, perhaps you'll say,
Corporeal organs if we take away?
Since it from them proceeds, and with them must
decay.

Why not? or why may not the soul receive
New organs, since e'en art can these retrieve?
The silver trumpet aids the' obstructed ear,
And optic glasses the dim eye can clear;
These in mankind new faculties create,
And lift him far above his native state;
Call down revolving planets from the sky,
Earth's secret treasures open to his eye,
The whole minute creation make his own,
With all the wonders of a world unknown.

How could the mind, did she alone depend
On sense, the errors of those senses mend?
Yet oft we see those senses she corrects,
And oft their information quite rejects.
In distances of things, their shapes, and size,
Our reason judges better than our eyes.

Declares not this the soul's preeminence
Superior too, and quite distinct from sense?
For sure 'tis likely that, since now so high,
Clogg'd and unfledged she dares her wings to try,
Loosed and mature she shall her strength display,
And soar at length to Truth's refulgent ray.

Inquire you how these powers we shall attain,
'Tis not for us to know; our search is vain:
Can any now remember or relate
How he existed in the' embryo state?
Or one, from birth insensible of day,
Conceive ideas of the solar ray?
That light's denied to him which others see
He knows, perhaps you'll say,—and so do we.

The mind contemplative finds nothing here
On earth that's worthy of a wish or fear:
He whose sublime pursuit is God and truth
Burns, like some absent and impatient youth,
To join the object of his warm desires;
Thence to sequester'd shades and streams retires,
And there delights his passion to rehearse
In Wisdom's sacred voice, or in harmonious verse.

To me most happy therefore he appears,
Who having once, unmoved by hopes or fears,
Survey'd this sun, earth, ocean, clouds, and flame,
Well satisfied, returns from whence he came.
Is life a hundred years, or e'er so few,
'Tis repetition all, and nothing new:
A fair where thousands meet, but none can stay,
An inn where travellers bait, then post away;
A sea where man perpetually is toss'd,
Now plunged in business, now in trifles lost:
Who leave it first the peaceful port first gain;
Hold then! nor farther launch into the main;

Contract your sails ; life nothing can bestow
By long continuance, but continued woe :
The wretched privilege daily to deplore
The funerals of our friends who go before :
Diseases, pains, anxieties, and cares,
And age surrounded with a thousand snares.

But whither hurried by a generous scorn
Of this vain world, ah, whither am I borne ?
Let's not unbid the' Almighty's standard quit ;
Howe'er severe our post, we must submit.

Could I a firm persuasion once attain
That after death no *being* would remain ;
To those dark shades I'd willingly descend,
Where all must sleep, this drama at an end :
Nor life accept although renew'd by fate
E'en from its earliest and its happiest state.

Might I from Fortune's bounteous hand receive
Each boon, each blessing in her power to give,
Genius and science, morals and good sense,
Unenvied honours, wit, and eloquence,
A numerous offspring to the world well known
Both for paternal virtues, and their own :
E'en at this mighty price I'd not be bound
To tread the same dull circle round and round ;
The soul requires enjoyments more sublime,
By space unbounded, undestroy'd by time.

BOOK II.

GOD then through all creation gives, we find,
Sufficient marks of an indulgent mind,
Excepting in ourselves ; ourselves of all
His works the chief on this terrestrial ball,

His own bright image, who alone unbless'd
Feel ills perpetual, happy all the rest.
But hold, presumptuous! charge not Heaven's
decree

With such injustice, such partiality.

Yet true it is, survey we life around,
Whole hosts of ills on every side are found;
Who wound not here and there by chance a foe,
But at the species meditate the blow:
What millions perish by each other's hands
In war's fierce rage! or by the dread commands
Of tyrants languish out their lives in chains,
Or lose them in variety of pains!
What numbers pinch'd by want and hunger die,
In spite of Nature's liberality!
(Those, still more numerous, I to name disdain,
By lewdness and intemperance justly slain;)
What numbers, guiltless of their own disease,
Are snatch'd by sudden death, or waste by slow
degrees!

Where then is Virtue's well deserved reward?—
Let's pay to Virtue every due regard,
That she enables man, let us confess,
To bear those evils which she can't redress,
Gives hope and conscious peace, and can assuage
The' impetuous tempests both of lust and rage;
Yet she's a guard so far from being sure
That oft her friends peculiar ills endure:
Where Vice prevails severest is their fate,
Tyrants pursue them with a threefold hate;
How many struggling in their country's cause,
And from their country meriting applause,
Have fallen by wretches fond to be enslaved,
And perish'd by the hands themselves had saved!

Soon as superior worth appears in view,
See knaves and fools united to pursue!
The man so form'd they all conspire to blame,
And Envy's poisonous tooth attacks his fame;
Should he at length, so truly good and great,
Prevail, and rule with honest views the state,
Then must he toil for an ungrateful race,
Submit to clamour, libels, and disgrace,
Threaten'd, opposed, defeated in his ends,
By foes seditious, and aspiring friends.
Hear this, and tremble! all who would be great,
Yet know not what attends that dangerous
wretched state.

Is private life from all these evils free?
Vice of all kinds, rage, envy, there we see,
Deceit, that Friendship's mask insidious wears,
Quarrels, and feuds, and law's entangling snares.

But there are pleasures still in human life,
Domestic ease, a tender, loving wife,
Children, whose dawning smiles your heart engage,
The grace and comfort of soft-stealing age.

If happiness exists, 'tis surely here;
But are these joys exempt from care and fear?
Need I the miseries of that state declare,
When different passions draw the wedded pair?
Or say how hard those passions to discern,
Ere the die's cast, and 'tis too late to learn?

Who can ensure that what is right and good
These children shall pursue? or, if they should,
Death comes when least you fear so black a day,
And all your blooming hopes are snatch'd away.

We say not, that these ills from Virtue flow;
Did her wise precepts rule the world, we know
The golden ages would again begin;
But 'tis our lot in this to suffer and to sin,

Observing this, some sages have decreed
That all things from two causes must proceed;
Two principles with equal power endued,
This wholly evil, that supremely good.
From this arise the miseries we endure,
Whilst that administers a friendly cure;
Hence life is chequer'd still with bliss and woe,
Hence tares with golden crops promiscuous grow,
And poisonous serpents make their dread repose
Beneath the covert of the fragrant rose.

Can such a system satisfy the mind?
Are both these gods in equal power conjoin'd,
Or one superior?—Equal if you say,
Chaos returns, since neither will obey;
Is one superior? good or ill must reign,
Eternal joy or everlasting pain.
Whiche'er is conquer'd must entirely yield,
And the victorious god enjoy the field:
Hence with these fictions of the Magi's brain!
Hence oozy Nile, with all her monstrous train!

Or comes the stoic nearer to the right?
He holds, that whatsoever yields delight,
Wealth, fame, externals all are useless things;
Himself, half-starving, happier far than kings.
'Tis fine indeed to be so wondrous wise!
By the same reasoning too he pain denies;
Roast him, or flay him, break him on the wheel,
Retract he will not, though he can't but feel;
Pain's not an ill, he utters with a groan,
What then?—an inconvenience 'tis, he'll own:
What vigour, health, and beauty? are these good?—
No: they may be accepted, not pursued:
Absurd to squabble thus about a name,
Quibbling with different words that mean the same.

Stoic, were you not framed of flesh and blood,
You might be bless'd without external good;
But know, be self-sufficient as you can,
You are not spirit quite, but frail and mortal man.

But since these sages, so absurdly wise,
Vainly pretend enjoyments to despise,
Because externals, and in Fortune's power,
Now mine, now thine, the blessings of an hour;
Why value then that strength of mind they boast,
As often varying, and as quickly lost?
A headach hurts it, or a rainy day,
And a slow fever wipes it quite away.

See one² whose counsels, one³ whose conquer-
ing hand

Once saved Britannia's almost sinking land:
Examples of the mind's extensive power,
Examples too how quickly fades that flower.

Him let me add, whom late we saw excel
In each politer kind of writing well⁴;
Whether he strove our follies to expose
In easy verse, or droll and humorous prose;
Few years, alas! compel his throne to quit
This mighty monarch o'er the realms of wit;
See, self-surviving, he's an idiot grown!
A melancholy proof our parts are not our own.

Thy tenets, stoic, yet we may forgive,
If in a future state we cease to live.
For here the virtuous suffer much 'tis plain;
If pain is evil, this must God arraign;
And on this principle confess we must,
Pain can no evil be, or God must be unjust.

² Lord Somers.

³ Duke of Marlborough.

⁴ Dean Swift.

Blind man! whose reason such strait bounds
confine

That, ere it touches truth's extremest line,
It stops amazed, and quits the great design.
Own you not, stoic, God is just and true?
Dare to proceed; secure this path pursue:
'Twill soon conduct you far beyond the tomb,
To future justice, and a life to come.
This path, you say, is hid in endless night.
'Tis self-conceit alone obstructs your sight:
You stop, ere half your destined course is run,
And triumph when the conquest is not won:
By this the sophists were of old misled: [bred!
See what a monstrous race from one mistake is

Hear then my argument:—'confess we must,
A God there is, supremely wise and just:
If so, however things affect our sight,
As sings our bard, 'whatever is, is right.'
But is it right, what here so oft appears,
That vice should triumph, virtue sink in tears?
The inference then, that closes this debate,
Is, that there must exist a *future state*.
The wise, extending their inquiries wide,
See how both statés are by connexion tied;
Fools view but part, and not the whole survey,
So crowd existence all into a day.
Hence are they led to hope, but hope in vain,
That justice never will resume her reign;
On this vain hope, adulterers, thieves rely,
And to this altar vile assassins fly.
'But rules not God by general laws divine:
Man's vice or virtue change not the design?'
What laws are these? instruct us if you can:—
There's one design'd for brutes, and one for man:

Another guides inactive matter's course,
Attracting, and attracted by its force:
Hence mutual gravity subsists between
Far distant worlds, and ties the vast machine.

The laws of life, why need I call to mind,
Obey'd by birds and beasts of every kind?
By all the sandy desert's savage brood,
And all the numerous offspring of the flood;
Of these none uncontrol'd and lawless rove,
But to some destined end spontaneous move:
Led by that instinct Heaven itself inspires,
Or so much reason as their state requires;
See all with skill acquire their daily food,
All use those arms which nature has bestow'd;
Produce their tender progeny, and feed
With care parental, whilst that care they need;
In these loved offices completely bless'd,
No hopes beyond them, nor vain fears molest.

Man o'er a wider field extends his views;
God through the wonders of his works pursues,
Exploring thence his attributes and laws,
Adores, loves, imitates the' Eternal Cause;
For sure in nothing we approach so nigh
The great example of Divinity
As in benevolence: the patriot's soul
Knows not self-centred for itself to roll,
But warms, enlightens, animates the whole:
Its mighty orb embraces first his friends,
His country next, then man; nor here it ends,
But to the meanest animal descends.

Wise Nature has this social law confirm'd,
By forming man so helpless and unarm'd;
His want of others' aid, and power of speech
To' implore that aid, this lesson daily teach:

Mankind with other animals compare,
Single how weak and impotent they are!
But view them in their complicated state;
Their powers how wondrous, and their strength
how great,

When social virtue individuals joins,
And in one solid mass like gravity combines!

This then's the first great law by Nature given,
Stamp'd on our souls, and ratified by Heaven;
All from utility this law approve,
As every private bliss must spring from social love.

Why deviate then so many from this law?

See passions, custom, vice, and folly draw!

Survey the rolling globe from east to west,

How few, alas! how very few are bless'd!

Beneath the frozen poles, and burning line,

What poverty and indolence combine,

To cloud with error's mists the human mind!

No trace of man, but in the form we find.

And are we free from error and distress, [bless?

Whom Heaven with clearer light has pleased to

Whom true Religion leads? (for she but leads

By soft persuasion, not by force proceeds;)

Behold how we avoid this radiant sun,

This proffer'd guide how obstinately shun,

And after sophistry's vain systems run!

For these as for essentials we engage

In wars and massacres with holy rage;

Brothers by brothers' impious hands are slain,

Mistaken zeal, how savage is thy reign!

Unpunish'd vices here so much abound,

All right and wrong, all order they confound;

These are the giants who the gods defy,

And mountains heap on mountains to the sky;

Sees this the' Almighty Judge, or seeing spares,
And deems the crimes of man beneath his cares?
He sees: and will at last rewards bestow,
And punishments, not less assured for being slow.

Nor doubt I, though this state confused appears,
That e'en in this God sometimes interferes;
Sometimes, lest man should quite his power disown,
He makes that power to trembling nations known:
But rarely this; not for each vulgar end,
As superstition's idle tales pretend,
Who thinks all foes to God who are her own,
Directs his thunder, and usurps his throne.

Nor know I not how much a conscious mind
Avails to punish or reward mankind;
E'en in this life thou, impious wretch, must feel
The fury's scourges and the' infernal wheel:
From man's tribunal, though thou hopest to run,
Thyself thou canst not, nor thy conscience shun:
What must thou suffer when each dire disease,
The progeny of vice, thy fabric seize?
Consumption, fever, and the racking pain
Of spasms, and gout, and stone, a frightful train!
When life new tortures can alone supply,
Life, thy sole hope, thou'lt hate, yet dread to die.

Should such a wretch to numerous years arrive,
It can be little worth his while to live:
No honours, no regards his age attend,
Companions fly; he ne'er could have a friend:
His flatterers leave him, and with wild affright
He looks within, and shudders at the sight:
When threatening Death uplifts his pointed dart,
With what impatience he applies to art,
Life to prolong amidst disease and pains!
Why this, if after it no sense remains?

Why should he chöose these miseries to endure,
If Death could grant an everlasting cure?

'Tis plain there's something whispers in his ear
(Though fain he'd hide it), he has much to fear.

See the reverse; how happy those we find,
Who know by merit to engage mankind!
Praised by each tongue, by every heart beloved,
For virtues practised, and for arts improved:
Their easy aspects shine with smiles serene,
And all is peace and happiness within:
Their sleep is ne'er disturb'd by fears or strife,
Nor lust nor wine impair the springs of life.
Him Fortune cannot sink, nor much elate,
Whose views extend beyond this mortal state;
By age when summon'd to resign his breath,
Calm and serene, he sees approaching death
As the safe port, the peaceful silent shore
Where he may rest, life's tedious voyage o'er:
He, and he only is of death afraid,
Whom his own conscience has a coward made;
Whilst he, who virtue's radiant course has run,
Descends like a serenely setting sun,
His thoughts triumphant heaven alone employs,
And hope anticipates his future joys.
So good, so bless'd the' illustrious Hough^s we find,
Whose image dwells with pleasure on my mind;
The mitre's glory, freedom's constant friend,
In times which ask'd a champion to defend;
Who after near a hundred virtuous years,
His senses perfect, free from pains and fears,
Replete with life, with honours, and with age,
Like an applauded actor left the stage:

^s Bishop of Worcester.

Or like some victor in the' Olympic games,
Who, having run his course, the crown of glory
claims.

From this just contrast plainly it appears,
How conscience can inspire both hopes and fears;
But whence proceed these hopes, or whence this
If nothing really can affect the dead? [dread,
See all things join to promise, and presage
The sure arrival of a future age!

Whate'er their lot is here, the good and wise
Nor dote on life nor peevishly despise.
An honest man, when Fortune's storms begin,
Has consolation always sure within,
And, if she sends a more propitious gale,
He's pleased, but not forgetful it may fail.

Nor fear that he, who sits so loose to life,
Should too much shun its labours and its strife;
And scorning wealth, contented to be mean,
Shrink from the duties of this bustling scene;
Or, when his country's safety claims his aid,
Avoid the fight, inglorious and afraid:
Who scorns life most must surely be most brave,
And he, who power contemns, be least a slave:
Virtue will lead him to ambition's ends,
And prompt him to defend his country and his
friends.

But still his merit you cannot regard,
Who thus pursues a posthumous reward;
His soul, you cry, is uncorrupt and great,
Who, quite uninfluenced by a future state,
Embraces Virtue from a nobler sense
Of her abstracted, native excellence,
From the self-conscious joy her essence brings,
The beauty, fitness, harmony of things.

It may be so: yet he deserves applause,
Who follows where instructive Nature draws ;
Aims at rewards by her indulgence given,
And soars triumphant on her wings to heaven.

Say what this venal virtuous man pursues?
No mean rewards, no mercenary views ;
Not wealth usurious, or a numerous train,
Not fame by fraud acquired, or title vain !
He follows but where Nature points the road,
Rising in Virtue's school, till he ascends to God !
But we, the' inglorious common herd of man,
Sail without compass, toil without a plan ;
In Fortune's varying storms for ever toss'd,
Shadows pursue, that in pursuit are lost ;
Mere infants all, till life's extremest day,
Scrambling for toys, then tossing them away.

Who rests of immortality assured
Is safe, whatever ills are here endured :
He hopes not vainly in a world like this,
To meet with pure uninterrupted bliss ;
For good and ill, in this imperfect state,
Are ever mix'd by the decrees of fate.
With Wisdom's richest harvest Folly grows,
And baleful hemlock mingles with the rose ;
All things are blended, changeable, and vain,
No hope, no wish we perfectly obtain :
God may perhaps (might human Reason's line
Pretend to fathom infinite design)
Have thus ordain'd things, that the restless mind
No happiness complete on earth may find ;
And, by this friendly chastisement made wise,
To heaven her safest best retreat may rise.

Come then, since now in safety we have pass'd
Through Error's rocks, and see the port at last,

Let us review and recollect the whole.—
Thus stands my argument:—The thinking soul
Cannot terrestrial or material be,
But claims by nature Immortality;
God, who created it, can make it end,
We question not, but cannot apprehend
He will; because it is by him endued
With strong ideas of all-perfect good;
With wondrous powers to know and calculate
Things too remote from this our earthly state;
With sure presages of a life to come;
All false and useless, if beyond the tomb
Our beings cease: we therefore can't believe
God either acts in vain, or can deceive.

If every rule of equity demands,
That Vice and Virtue from the' Almighty's hands
Should due rewards and punishments receive,
And this by no means happens whilst we live;
It follows that a time must surely come,
When each shall meet their well adjusted doom:
Then shall this scene, which now to human sight
Seems so unworthy wisdom infinite,
A system of consummate skill appear,
And, every cloud dispersed, be beautiful and clear.

Doubt we of this! what solid proof remains,
That o'er the world a wise Disposer reigns?
Whilst all creation speaks a power divine,
Is it deficient in the main design?
Not so: the day shall come (pretend not now
Presumptuous to inquire or when or how),
But after death shall come the' important day,
When God to all his justice shall display;
Each action with impartial eyes regard,
And in a just proportion punish and reward.

AN
ESSAY ON VIRTUE.

TO
THE RIGHT HON. PHILIP YORKE, ESQ¹.

Atque ipsa utilitas justī prope mater et æqui.
HOR.

THOU, whom nor honours, wealth, nor youth can
 spoil
With the least vice of each luxuriant soil,
Say, Yorke (for sure, if any, thou canst tell),
What Virtue is, who practise it so well :
Say, where inhabits this Sultana queen ;
Praised and adored by all, but rarely seen :
By what sure mark her essence can we trace,
When each religion, faction, age, and place
Sets up some fancied idol of its own,
A vain pretender to her sacred throne ?
In man too oft a well dissembled part,
A self-denying pride in woman's heart,
In synods faith, and in the fields of fame
Valour usurps her honours and her name ;
Whoe'er their sense of virtue would express,
'Tis still by something they themselves possess.
Hence youth good humour, frugal craft old age,
Warm politicians term it party-rage,

¹ Afterwards second Earl of Hardwicke.

True churchmen zeal right orthodox; and hence
Fools think it gravity, and wits pretence;
To constancy alone fond lovers join it,
And maids unask'd to chastity confine it.

But have we then no law besides our will?
No just criterion fix'd to good and ill?
As well at noon we may obstruct our sight,
Then doubt if such a thing exists as light;
For no less plain would nature's law appear
As the meridian sun unchanged and clear,
Would we but search for what we were design'd,
And for what end the' Almighty form'd mankind;
A rule of life we then should plainly see,
For to pursue that end must virtue be.

Then what is that? not want of power, or fame,
Or worlds unnumber'd to applaud his name,
But a desire his blessings to diffuse,
And fear lest millions should existence lose;
His goodness only could his power employ,
And an eternal warmth to propagate his joy.

Hence soul and sense, diffused through every
Make happiness as infinite as space; [place,
Thousands of suns beyond each other blaze,
Orbs roll o'er orbs, and glow with mutual rays;
Each is a world, where, form'd with wondrous art,
Unnumber'd species live through every part:
In every tract of ocean, earth, and skies,
Myriads of creatures still successive rise:
Scarce buds a leaf, or springs the vilest weed,
But little flocks upon its verdure feed;
No fruit our palate courts, or flower our smell,
But on its fragrant bosom nations dwell,
All form'd with proper faculties to share
The daily bounties of their Maker's care;

The great Creator from his heavenly throne,
Pleased, on the wide expanded joy looks down,
And his eternal law is only this—
That all contribute to the general bliss.

Nature so plain this primal law displays,
Each living creature sees it, and obeys:
Each, form'd for all, promotes through private care
The public good, and justly tastes its share.
All understand their great Creator's will,
Strive to be happy, and in that fulfil;
Mankind excepted, lord of all beside,
But only slave to folly, vice, and pride;
'Tis he that's deaf to this command alone,
Delights in other's woe, and courts his own,
Racks and destroys with torturing steel and flame,
For luxury brutes, and man himself for fame;
Sets Superstition high on Virtue's throne,
Then thinks his Maker's temper like his own;
Hence are his altars stain'd with reeking gore,
As if he could atone for crimes by more:
Hence, whilst offended Heaven he strives in vain
To' appease by fasts and voluntary pain,
E'en in repenting he provokes again.

How easy is our yoke! how light our load!
Did we not strive to mend the laws of God!
For his own sake no duty he can ask,
The common welfare is our only task:
For this sole end his precepts, kind as just,
Forbid intemperance, murder, theft, and lust;
With every act injurious to our own
Or others' good, for such are crimes alone;
For this are peace, love, charity enjoin'd,
With all that can secure and bless mankind.

Thus is the public safety Virtue's cause,
And happiness the end of all her laws;
For such by nature is the human frame,
Our duty and our interest are the same.

‘ But hold (cries out some puritan-divine,
Whose well stuff'd cheeks with ease and plenty
shine),

Is this to fast, to mortify, refrain,
And work salvation out with fear and pain?—
We own the rigid lessons of their schools
Are widely different from these easy rules;
Virtue, with them, is only to abstain
From all that nature asks, and covet pain;
Pleasure and vice are ever near akin,
And, if we thirst, cold water is a sin:
Heaven's path is rough and intricate, they say,
Yet all are damn'd that trip, or miss their way;
God is a Being cruel and severe,
And man a wretch, by his command placed here,
In sunshine for a while to take a turn,
Only to dry and make him fit to burn.

Mistaken men, too piously severe;
Through craft misleading, or misled by fear;
How little they God's counsels comprehend,
Our universal parent, guardian, friend!
Who, forming by degrees to bliss mankind,
This globe our sportive nursery assign'd,
Where for a while his fond paternal care
Feasts us with every joy our state can bear:
Each sense, touch, taste, and smell dispense de-
light,

Music our hearing, beauty charms our sight;
Trees, herbs, and flowers to us their spoils resign,
Its pearl the rock presents, its gold the mine;

Beasts, fowl, and fish their daily tribute give
Of food and clothes, and die that we may live:
Seasons but change, new pleasures to produce,
And elements contend to serve our use:
Love's gentle shafts, ambition's towering wings,
The pomps of senates, churches, courts, and kings,
All that our reverence, joy, or hope create,
Are the gay playthings of this infant state.
Scarcely an ill to human life belongs,
But what our follies cause, or mutual wrongs;
Or if some stripes from Providence we feel,
He strikes with pity, and but wounds to heal;
Kindly perhaps sometimes afflicts us here,
To guide our views to a sublimer sphere,
In more exalted joys to fix our taste,
And wean us from delights that cannot last.
Our present good the easy task is made,
To earn superior bliss, when this shall fade:
For, soon as e'er these mortal pleasures cloy,
His hand shall lead us to sublimer joy;
Snatch us from all our little sorrows here,
Calm every grief, and dry each childish tear:
Waft us to regions of eternal peace,
Where bliss and virtue grow with like increase;
From strength to strength our souls for ever guide,
Through wondrous scenes of being yet untried,
Where in each stage we shall more perfect grow,
And new perfections new delights bestow.

Oh! would mankind but make these truths their
guide,
And force the helm from prejudice and pride.
Were once these maxims fix'd, that God's our
friend,
Virtue our good, and happiness our end;

How soon must reason o'er the world prevail,
And error, fraud, and superstition fail!
None would hereafter then, with groundless fear,
Describe the' Almighty cruel and severe,
Predestinating some without pretence
To heaven, and some to hell for no offence;
Inflicting endless pains for transient crimes,
And favouring sects or nations, men or times.
To please him none would foolishly forbear
Or food or rest, or itch in shirts of hair,
Or deem it merit to believe or teach
What reason contradicts, within its reach;
None would fierce zeal for piety mistake,
Or malice for whatever tenets' sake,
Or think salvation to one sect confined,
And heaven too narrow to contain mankind.

No more then nymphs, by long neglect grown
nice,

Would in one female frailty sum up vice,
And censure those who, nearer to the right,
Think virtue is but to dispense delight².

No servile tenets would admittance find,
Destructive of the rights of humankind;
Of power divine, hereditary right,
And nonresistance to a tyrant's might:
For sure that all should thus for one be cursed
Is but great nature's edict just reversed.

No moralists, then, righteous to excess,
Would show fair Virtue in so black a dress
That they, like boys, who some feign'd sprite array,
First from the spectre fly themselves away:

² These lines mean only, that censoriousness is a vice more odious than unchastity; this always proceeding from malevolence, that sometimes from too much goodnature.

No preachers in the terrible delight,
But choose to win by reason, not affright;
Not, conjurors like, in fire and brimstone dwell,
And draw each moving argument from hell.

No more our sage interpreters of laws
Would fatten on obscurities and flaws,
But rather, nobly careful of their trust,
Strive to wipe off the long-contracted dust,
And be, like Hardwicke, guardians of the just.

No more applause would on ambition wait,
And laying waste the world be counted great,
But one goodnatured act more praises gain
Than armies overthrown, and thousands slain;
No more would brutal rage disturb our peace,
But envy, hatred, war, and discord cease;
Our own and others' good each hour employ,
And all things smile with universal joy;
Virtue with Happiness, her consort, join'd
Would regulate and bless each human mind,
And man be what his Maker first design'd.

WRITTEN IN THE RIGHT HON. THE
EARL OF OXFORD'S LIBRARY
AT WIMPLE ¹.

1729.

WHO, uninspired, can tread this sacred ground,
With all the sons of Fame encompass'd round?
Where, crown'd with wreaths of ever verdant bays,
Each sister Art her willing charms displays :
Mellow'd by time, here beauteous paintings glow,
There marble busts illustrious faces show :
And in old coins are little heroes seen,
With venerable rust of ages green :
Around, unwounded by the teeth of age,
By gothic fire and Persecution's rage,
Perfect and fair, unnumber'd volumes stand,
By Providence preserved for Oxford's hand.

Whilst thus within these magic walls I stray,
At once all climes and ages I survey :

¹ Wimple Hall, with the estate round it, was formerly the possession of the Cutts' family, an ancient family in the county of Cambridge, and a descendant of which was the gallant Lord Cutts, who so frequently distinguished himself in the several sieges and battles during the war in which the great Duke of Marlborough commanded.—This estate was sold by the Cutts' family to the famous Sir John Cutler, who settled it on the marriage of his daughter with Lord Radnor. Lord Radnor afterwards sold it to John Holles, Duke of Newcastle, in the partition of whose estates it came to the Earl of Oxford, who married his only daughter. This he made his country residence, and here was kept his famous library till the time of his death. After his death, it was sold by his family to the Chancellor Lord Hardwicke, from whom it descended to the present Earl Hardwicke.

On Fancy's wings I fly from shore to shore,
Recall past time, and live whole eras o'er:
Converse with heroes famed in ancient song,
And bards, by whom those heroes breathe so
long:

Observe the quick migrations Learning makes,
How harass'd nations trembling she forsakes,
And hastes away to build her downy nest
In happier climes, with peace and plenty bless'd.

See how, in famed Augustus' golden days,
Wit triumphs, crown'd with universal praise!
Approaches thrones with a majestic air,
The Prince's mistress, and the Statesman's care.
Mecænas shines in every classic page,
Mecænas, once the Harley of his age.
Nor with less glory she her charms display'd,
In Albion once when royal Anna sway'd.
See Oxford smiles! and all the tuneful train,
In his Britannia's sons revive again,
Prior, like Horace, strikes the sounding strings,
And in harmonious Pope once more great Maro
sings.

Again she waves her pinions to be gone,
And only hopes protection from his son:
Chased from the senate and the court she flies,
There craft and party-zeal her place supplies.
Yet still, since fix'd in Wimple's happy plain
(Her last retreat), she knows not to complain.
There in great Oxford's converse does engage
The' instructed ear, and shames a vicious age;
Or in his consort's accents stands confess'd,
And charms with graceful ease each listening
guest,

Or with her loved companions gladly tied,
Goodness sincere, and Beauty void of pride,
Fixes her throne in Margaretta's ² face,
And from her lips acquires a new resistless grace.

WRITTEN IN

LOCKE'S ESSAY ON HUMAN UNDER-
STANDING.

LONG had the mind of man with curious art
Search'd Nature's wondrous plan through every
part,

Measured each tract of ocean, earth, and sky,
And number'd all the rolling orbs on high;
Yet still, so learn'd, herself she little knew,
Till Locke's unerring pen the portrait drew.

So beauteous Eve a while in Eden stray'd,
And all her great Creator's works survey'd;
By sun and moon she knew to mark the hour,
She knew the genus of each plant and flower;
She knew, when sporting on the verdant lawn,
The tender lambkin and the nimble fawn:
But still a stranger to her own bright face,
She guess'd not at its form, nor what she was;
Till, led at length to some clear fountain's side,
She view'd her beauties in the crystal tide;
The shining mirror all her charms displays,
And her eyes catch their own rebounded rays.

² Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley, afterwards married to William, the second Duke of Portland.

THE
ART OF DANCING.

INSCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HON.

THE LADY FANNY FIELDING¹.

1728.

Incessu patuit Dea. VIRG.

CANTO I.

IN the smooth dance to move with graceful mien,
Easy with care, and sprightly though serene,
To mark the' instructions echoing strains convey,
And with just steps each tuneful note obey,
I teach; be present, all ye sacred choir,
Blow the soft flute, and strike the sounding lyre:
When Fielding bids, your kind assistance bring,
And at her feet the lowly tribute fling:
Oh, may her eyes (to her this verse is due)
What first themselves inspired vouchsafe to view!
Hail, loveliest Art! that canst all hearts insnare,
And make the fairest still appear more fair.

¹ Lady Fanny Fielding was the youngest of the six daughters of Basil, Earl of Denbigh and Desmond, by his wife Hester, daughter of Sir Basil Firebrass, Bart. She was one of the finest dancers of her time, but more distinguished for her beauty and amiable manners. She married Daniel, the seventh Earl of Winchelsea and third Earl of Nottingham, in the year 1729, and died in the year 1734.

Beauty can little execution do,
Unless she borrows half her arms from you ;
Few, like Pygmalion, dote on lifeless charms,
Or care to clasp a statue in their arms ;
But breasts of flint must melt with fierce desire,
When art and motion wake the sleeping fire.
A Venus, drawn by great Apelles' hand,
May for a while our wondering eyes command,
But still, though form'd with all the powers of art,
The lifeless piece can never warm the heart ;
So a fair nymph, perhaps, may please the eye, -
Whilst all her beauteous limbs unactive lie,
But when her charms are in the dance display'd,
Then every heart adores the lovely maid :
This sets her beauty in the fairest light,
And shows each grace in full perfection bright ;
Then, as she turns around, from every part,
Like porcupines, she sends a piercing dart ;
In vain, alas ! the fond spectator tries
To shun the pleasing dangers of her eyes,
For, Parthianlike, she wounds as sure behind,
With flowing curls, and ivory neck reclined :
Whether her steps the Minuet's mazes trace,
Or the slow Louvre's more majestic pace,
Whether the Rigadoon employs her care,
Or sprightly Jig displays the nimble fair,
At every step new beauties we explore,
And worship now what we admired before :
So when Æneas in the Tyrian grove
Fair Venus met, the charming queen of Love,
The beauteous goddess, whilst unmoved she stood,
Seem'd some fair nymph, the guardian of the wood ;
But when she moved, at once her heavenly mien
And graceful step confess bright Beauty's queen,

New glories o'er her form each moment rise,
And all the goddess opens to his eyes.

Now haste, my Muse, pursue thy destined way,
What dresses best become the dancer say;
The rules of dress forget not to impart,
A lesson previous to the dancing art.

The soldier's scarlet, glowing from afar,
Shows that his bloody occupation's war;
Whilst the lawn band, beneath a double chin,
As plainly speaks divinity within; [snows,
The milkmaid safe through driving rains and
Wrapp'd in her cloak and propp'd on pattens, goes;
While the soft belle, immured in velvet chair,
Needs but the silken shoe, and trusts her bosom
bare:

The woolly drab, and English broad-cloth warm,
Guard well the horseman from the beating storm,
But load the dancer with too great a weight,
And call from every pore the dewy sweat;
Rather let him his active limbs display
In camblet thin, or glossy paduasay,
Let no unwieldy pride his shoulders press,
But airy, light, and easy be his dress;
Thin be his yielding sole, and low his heel,
So shall he nimbly bound, and safely wheel.

But let not precepts known my verse prolong,
Precepts which use will better teach than song;
For why should I the gallant spark command,
With clean white gloves to fit his ready hand?
Or in his fob enlivening spirits wear,
And pungent salts to raise the fainting fair?
Or hint, the sword that dangles at his side,
Should from its silken bondage be untied?

Why should my lays the youthful tribe advise,
Lest snowy clouds from out their wigs arise :
So shall their partners mourn their laces spoil'd,
And shining silks with greasy powder soil'd ?
Nor need I, sure, bid prudent youths beware,
Lest with erected tongues their buckles stare,
The pointed steel shall oft their stocking rend,
And oft the' approaching petticoat offend.

And now, ye youthful fair, I sing to you,
With pleasing smiles my useful labours view ;
For you the silkworms fine-wrought webs display,
And labouring spin their little lives away ;
For you bright gems with radiant colours glow,
Fair as the dyes that paint the heavenly bow ;
For you the sea resigns its pearly store,
And earth unlocks her mines of treasured ore ;
In vain yet Nature thus her gifts bestows,
Unless yourselves with art those gifts dispose.

Yet think not, nymphs, that in the glittering ball,
One form of dress prescribed can suit with all ;
One brightest shines when wealth and art combine
To make the finish'd piece completely fine ;
When least adorn'd, another steals our hearts :
And rich in native beauties, wants not arts :
In some are such resistless graces found
That in all dresses they are sure to wound ;
Their perfect forms all foreign aids despise,
And gems but borrow lustre from their eyes.

Let the fair nymph, in whose plump cheeks is
seen

A constant blush, be clad in cheerful green ;
In such a dress the sportive seanymphs go ;
So in their grassy bed fresh roses blow :

The lass, whose skin is like the hazel brown,
With brighter yellow should o'ercome her own ;
While maids, grown pale with sickness or despair,
The sable's mournful dye should choose to wear ;
So the pale moon still shines with purest light,
Clothed in the dusky mantle of the night.

But far from you be all those treacherous arts,
That wound with painted charms unwary hearts ;
Dancing's a touchstone that true beauty tries,
Nor suffers charms that Nature's hand denies :
Though for a while we may with wonder view
The rosy blush, and skin of lovely hue,
Yet soon the dance will cause the cheeks to glow,
And melt the waxen lips, and neck of snow :
So shine the fields in icy fetters bound,
Whilst frozen gems bespangle all the ground ;
Through the clear crystal of the glittering snow,
With scarlet dye the blushing hawthorns glow ;
O'er all the plains unnumber'd glories rief,
And a new bright creation charms our eyes,
Till Zephyr breathes, then all at once decay
The splendid scenes, their glories fade away ;
The fields resign the beauties not their own,
And all their snowy charms run trickling down.

Dare I in such momentous points advise,
I should condemn the hoop's enormous size :
Of ills I speak by long experience found,
Oft have I trod the' immeasurable round,
And mourn'd my shins bruised black with many
a wound.

Nor should the tighten'd stays, too straitly laced,
In whalebone bondage gall the slender waist ;
Nor waving lappets should the dancing fair,
Nor ruffles edged with dangling fringes, wear ;

Oft will the cobweb ornaments catch hold
On the approaching button, rough with gold,
Nor force nor art can then the bonds divide,
When once the' entangled gordian knot is tied.
So the unhappy pair, by Hymen's power,
Together join'd in some ill fated hour,
The more they strive their freedom to regain,
The faster binds the' indissoluble chain.

Let each fair maid, who fears to be disgraced,
Ever be sure to tie her garters fast,
Lest the loosed string, amidst the public ball,
A wished-for prize to some proud fop should fall,
Who the rich treasure shall triumphant show ;
And with warm blushes cause her cheeks to glow.

But yet (as Fortune by the selfsame ways
She humbles many, some delights to raise),
It happen'd once, a fair illustrious dame
By such neglect acquired immortal fame.
And hence the radiant Star and Garter blue
Britannia's nobles grace, if fame says true :
Hence still, Plantagenet, thy beauties bloom,
Though long since moulder'd in the dusky tomb,
Still thy lost Garter is thy sovereign's care,
And what each royal breast is proud to wear.

But let me now my lovely charge remind,
Lest they, forgetful, leave their fans behind ;
Lay not, ye fair, the pretty toy aside,
A toy at once display'd, for use and pride ;
A wondrous engine, that, by magic charms,
Cools your own breasts, and every other's warms.
What daring bard shall e'er attempt to tell
The powers that in this little weapon dwell ?
What verse can e'er explain its various parts,
Its numerous uses, motions, charms, and arts ?

Its painted folds, that, oft extended wide,
 The' afflicted fair one's blubber'd beauties hide,
 When secret sorrows her sad bosom fill,
 If Strephon is unkind, or Shock is ill :
 Its sticks, on which her eyes dejected pore,
 And pointing fingers number o'er and o'er,
 When the kind virgin burns with secret shame,
 Dies to consent, yet fears to own her flame ;
 Its shake triumphant, its victorious clap,
 Its angry flutter, and its wanton tap ?

Forbear, my Muse, the' extensive theme to sing,
 Nor trust in such a flight thy tender wing ;
 Rather do you in humble lines proclaim
 From whence this engine took its form and name,
 Say from what cause it first derived its birth,
 How form'd in heaven, how thence deduced to
 earth.

Once in Arcadia, that famed seat of love,
 There lived a nymph, the pride of all the grove,
 A lovely nymph, adorn'd with every grace,
 An easy shape, and sweetly blooming face ;
 Fanny the damsel's name, as chaste as fair,
 Each virgin's envy, and each swain's despair ;
 To charm her ear the rival shepherds sing,
 Blow the soft flute, and wake the trembling string.
 For her they leave their wandering flocks to rove,
 Whilst Fanny's name resounds through every
 grove, [love :
 And spreads on every tree, enclosed in knots of
 As Fielding's now, her eyes all hearts inflame,
 Like her in beauty, as alike in name.

'Twas when the summer sun now mounted high
 With fiercer beams had scorch'd the glowing sky,
 Beneath the covert of a cooling shade,
 To shun the heat, this lovely nymph was laid ;

The sultry weather o'er her cheeks had spread
A blush, that added to their native red;
And her fair breast, as polish'd marble white;
Was half conceal'd and half exposed to sight:
Æolus, the mighty god whom winds obey,
Observed the beauteous maid, as thus she lay;
O'er all her charms he gazed with fond delight,
And suck'd in poison at the dangerous sight;
He sighs, he burns; at last declares his pain,
But still he sighs, and still he woos in vain;
The cruel nymph, regardless of his moan,
Minds not his flame, uneasy with her own;
But still complains, that he who ruled the air
Would not command one Zephyr to repair
Around her face, nor gentle breeze to play
Through the dark glade, to cool the sultry day.
By love incited, and the hopes of joy,
The' ingenious god contrived this pretty toy,
With gales incessant to relieve her flame;
And call'd it Fan, from lovely Fanny's name.

CANTO II.

Now see prepared to lead the sprightly dance,
The lovely nymphs and well dress'd youths advance;
The spacious room receives each jovial guest,
And the floor shakes with pleasing weight oppress'd:
Thick ranged on every side, with various dyes
The fair in glossy silks our sight surprise;
So, in a garden bathed with genial showers,
A thousand sorts of variegated flowers,

Jonquils, carnations, pinks, and tulips rise,
 And in a gay confusion charm our eyes. [bright,
 High o'er their heads, with numerous candles
 Large sconces shed their sparkling beams of light,
 Their sparkling beams, that still more brightly glow
 Reflected back from gems and eyes below :
 Unnumber'd fans to cool the crowded fair,
 With breathing Zephyrs move the circling air ;
 The sprightly fiddle, and the sounding lyre
 Each youthful breast with generous warmth in-
 spire ;
 Fraught with all joys the blissful moments fly,
 Whilst music melts the ear, and beauty charms
 the eye.

Now let the youth, to whose superior place
 It first belongs the splendid ball to grace,
 With humble bow, and ready hand prepare,
 Forth from the crowd to lead his chosen fair ;
 The fair shall not his kind request deny,
 But to the pleasing toil with equal ardour fly.

But stay, rash pair, nor yet untaught advance,
 First hear the Muse, ere you attempt to dance :
 By art¹ directed o'er the foaming tide,
 Secure from rocks the painted vessels glide,
 By art the chariot scours the dusty plain, [rein ;
 Springs at the whip, and² hears the straitening
 To art our bodies must obedient prove,
 If e'er we hope with graceful ease to move.

Long was the dancing art unfix'd and free,
 Hence lost in error and uncertainty ;

¹ Arte citæ veloque rates remoque moventur,
 Arte leves currus.

OVID.

² ——— Neque audit currus habenas.

VIRG.

No precepts did it mind, or rules obey,
But every master taught a different way;
Hence ere each new born dance was fully tried,
The lovely product e'en in blooming died;
Through various hands in wild confusion toss'd,
Its steps were alter'd, and its beauties lost;
Till *Fuillet*³, the pride of *Gallia*, rose,
And did the dance in characters compose;
Each lovely grace by certain marks he taught,
And every step in lasting volumes wrote;
Hence o'er the world this pleasing art shall spread,
And every dance in every clime be read;
By distant masters shall each step be seen,
Though mountains rise, and oceans roar between.
Hence with her sister arts shall dancing claim
An equal right to universal fame;
And *Isaac's Rigadoon* shall live as long
As *Raphael's* painting or as *Virgil's* song.

Wise Nature ever, with a prudent hand,
Dispenses various gifts to every land;
To every nation frugally imparts
A genius fit for some peculiar arts;
To trade the Dutch incline, the Swiss to arms,
Music and verse are soft *Italia's* charms;
Britannia justly glories to have found
Lands unexplored, and sail'd the globe around;
But none will sure presume to rival France,
Whether she forms or executes the dance;
To her exalted genius 'tis we owe
The sprightly *Rigadoon* and *Louvre* slow,
The *Borée*, and *Courant* unpractised long,
The immortal *Minuet*, and smooth *Bretagne*,

³ *Fuillet* wrote the *Art of Dancing by characters*, in French; since translated by *Weaver*.

With all those dances of illustrious fame,
Which from their native country take their name⁴;
With these let every ball be first begun,
Nor Country-dance intrude till these are done.

Each cautious bard, ere he attempts to sing,
First gently fluttering tries his tender wing;
And if he finds that with uncommon fire
The Muses all his raptured soul inspire,
At once to heaven he soars in lofty odes,
And sings alone of heroes and of gods;
But if he trembling fears a flight so high,
He then descends to softer elegy;
And if in elegy he can't succeed,
In pastoral he may tune the oaten reed:
So should the dancer, ere he tries to move,
With care his strength, his weight, and genius
prove;

Then, if he finds kind Nature's gifts impart
Endowments proper for the dancing art;
If in himself he feels together join'd
An active body and ambitious mind,
In nimble Rigadoons he may advance,
Or in the Louvre's slow majestic dance;
If these he fears to reach, with easy pace
Let him the Minuet's circling mazes trace:
Is this too hard? this too let him forbear,
And to the Country-dance confine his care.

Would you in dancing every fault avoid,
To keep true time be first your thoughts employ'd;
All other errors they in vain shall mend,
Who in this one important point offend;
For this, when now united hand in hand
Eager to start the youthful couple stand,

⁴ French dances.

Let them a while their nimble feet restrain,
And with soft taps beat time to every strain :
So for the race prepared two coursers stand,
And with impatient pawings spurn the sand.

In vain a master shall employ his care,
Where nature has once fix'd a clumsy air ;
Rather let such, to country sports confined,
Pursue the flying hare or timorous hind :
Nor yet, while I the rural squire despise,
A mien effeminate would I advise :
With equal scorn I would the fop deride,
Nor let him dance,——but on the woman's side.

And you, fair nymphs, avoid with equal care
A stupid dulness and a coquette air :
Neither with eyes, that ever love the ground,
Asleep, like spinning tops, run round and round,
Nor yet with giddy looks and wanton pride,
Stare all around, and skip from side to side.

True dancing, like true wit, is best express'd
By nature only to advantage dress'd ;
'Tis not a nimble bound, or caper high,
That can pretend to please a curious eye ;
Good judges no such tumblers' tricks regard,
Or think them beautiful, because they're hard.

'Tis not enough that every stander-by
No glaring errors in your steps can spy,
The dance and music must so nicely meet,
Each note should seem an echo to your feet ;
A nameless grace must in each movement dwell,
Which words can ne'er express, or precepts tell,
Not to be taught, but ever to be seen
In Flavia's air and Chloe's easy mien ;
'Tis such an air that makes her thousands fall,
When Fielding dances at a birthnight ball ;

Smooth as Camilla she skims o'er the plain,
And flies like her through crowds of heroes slain.

Now when the Mianet oft repeated o'er
(Like all terrestrial joys) can please no more ;
And every nymph, refusing to expand
Her charms, declines the circulating hand ;
Then let the jovial Country-dance begin,
And the loud fiddles call each straggler in :
But, ere they come, permit me to disclose
How first, as legends tell, this pastime rose.

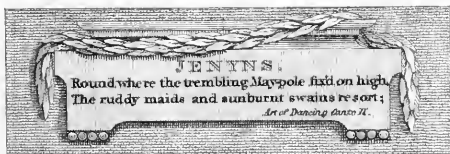
In ancient times (such times are now no more)
When Albion's crown illustrious Arthur wore,
In some fair opening glade, each summer's night,
Where the pale moon diffused her silver light,
On the soft carpet of a grassy field,
The sporting fairies their assemblies held :
Some lightly tripping with their pigmy queen,
In circling ringlets mark'd the level green,
Some with soft notes bade mellow pipes resound,
And music warble through the groves around ;
Oft lonely shepherds by the forest side,
Belated peasants oft their revels spy'd,
And home returning o'er their nutbrown ale,
Their guests diverted with the wondrous tale.
Instructed hence, throughout the British isle,
And fond to imitate the pleasing toil,
Round where the trembling maypole, fix'd on high,
Uplifts its flowery honours to the sky,
The ruddy maids and sunburnt swains resort,
And practise every night the lovely sport ;
On every side Æolian artists stand,
Whose active elbows swelling winds command ;
The swelling winds harmonious pipes inspire,
And blow in every breast a generous fire.

This taught, at first the country-dance began,
And hence to cities and to courts it ran;
Succeeding ages did in time impart
Various improvements to the lovely art;
From fields and groves to palaces removed,
Great ones the pleasing exercise approved:
Hence the loud fiddle and shrill trumpet's sounds
Are made companions of the dancer's bounds;
Hence gems and silks, brocades and ribbons join,
To make the ball with perfect lustre shine.

So rude at first the Tragic muse appear'd,
Her voice alone by rustic rabble heard,
Where twisting trees a cooling arbour made,
The pleased spectators sat beneath the shade;
The homely stage with rushes green was strew'd,
And in a cart the strolling actors rode:
Till time at length improved the great design,
And bad the scenes with painted landscapes shine;
Then art did all the bright machines dispose,
And theatres of Parian marble rose;
Then mimic thunder shook the canvass sky,
And gods descended from their towers on high.

With caution now let every youth prepare
To choose a partner from the mingled fair;
Vain would be here the instructing Muse's voice,
If she pretended to direct his choice:
Beauty alone by fancy is express'd,
And charms in different forms each different breast;
A snowy skin this amorous youth admires,
Whilst nutbrown cheeks another's bosom fires;
Small waists and slender limbs some hearts insnare,
Whilst others love the more substantial fair.

But let not outward charms your judgment sway,
Your reason rather than your eyes obey;



Drawn by W^m Hamilton R.A.

Engraved by Andr^d Gordon

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And in the dance, as in the marriage noose,
Rather for merit than for beauty choose :
Be her your choice, who knows with perfect skill
When she should move, and when she should be
Who uninstructed can perform her share, [still ;
And kindly half the pleasing burden bear.
Unhappy is that hopeless wretch's fate,
Who, fetter'd in the matrimonial state
With a poor simple unexperienced wife,
Is forced to lead the tedious dance of life ;
And such is his, with such a partner join'd,
A moving puppet, but without a mind :
Still must his hand be pointing out the way,
Yet ne'er can teach so fast as she can stray ;
Beneath her follies he must ever groan,
And ever blush for errors not his own.

But now behold united hand in hand,
Ranged on each side, the well pair'd couples stand !
Each youthful bosom beating with delight,
Waits the brisk signal for the pleasing sight ;
While lovely eyes, that flash unusual rays,
And snowy bosoms pull'd above the stays,
Quick busy hands and bridling heads declare
The fond impatience of the starting fair.
And see, the sprightly dance is now begun !
Now here, now there the giddy maze they run,
Now with slow steps they pace the circling ring,
Now all confused, too swift for sight they spring :
So, in a wheel with rapid fury toss'd,
The undistinguish'd spokes are in the motion lost.

The dancer here no more requires a guide,
To no strict steps his nimble feet are tied,
The Muse's precepts here would useless be,
Where all is fancied, unconfined, and free ;

Let him but to the music's voice attend,
By this instructed he can ne'er offend.
If to his share it falls the dance to lead,
In well known paths he may be sure to tread;
If others lead, let him their motions view,
And in their steps the winding maze pursue.

In every Country-dance a serious mind,
Turn'd for reflection, can a moral find,
In Hunt-the-Squirrel thus the nymph we view,
Seeks when we fly, but flies when we pursue:
Thus in round dances where our partners change,
And unconfined from fair to fair we range,
As soon as one from his own consort flies,
Another seizes on the lovely prize;
A while the favourite youth enjoys her charms,
Till the next comer steals her from his arms,
New ones succeed, the last is still her care;
How true an emblem of the' inconstant fair!

Where can philosophers, and sages wise,
Who read the curious volumes of the skies,
A model more exact than dancing name
Of the creation's universal frame?
Where worlds unnumber'd o'er the' etherial way,
In a bright, regular confusion stray;
Now here, now there they whirl along the sky,
Now near approach, and now far distant fly;
Now meet in the same order they begun,
And then the great celestial dance is done.

Where can the moralist find a juster plan
Of the vain labours and the life of man?
A while through justling crowds we toil and sweat,
And eagerly pursue we know not what,
Then when our trifling shortlived race is run,
Quite tired sit down just where we first begun.

Though to your arms kind fate's indulgent care
Has given a partner exquisitely fair,
Let not her charms so much engage your heart
That you neglect the skilful dancer's part;
Be not, when you the tuneful notes should hear,
Still whispering idle prattle in her ear;
When you should be employ'd, be not at play,
Nor for your joys all other steps delay;
But when the finish'd dance you once have done,
And with applause through every couple run,
There rest a while; there snatch the fleeting bliss,
The tender whisper, and the balmy kiss;
Each secret wish, each softer hope confess,
And her moist palm with eager fingers press;
With smiles the fair shall hear your warm desires,
When music melts her soul, and dancing fires.

Thus, mix'd with love, the pleasing toil pursue,
Till the unwelcome morn appears in view;
Then, when approaching day its beams displays,
And the dull candles shine with fainter rays;
Then, when the sun just rises o'er the deep,
And each bright eye is almost set in sleep,
With ready hand obsequious youths prepare
Safe to her coach to lead each chosen fair,
And guard her from the morn's inclement air:
Let a warm hood enwrap her lovely head,
And o'er her neck a handkerchief be spread;
Around her shoulders let this arm be cast,
Whilst that from cold defends her slender waist;
With kisses warm her balmy lips shall glow,
Unchill'd by nightly damps or wintry snow,
While generous white wine, mull'd with ginger
warm,
Safely protects her inward frame from harm.

But ever let my lovely pupils fear
To chill their mantling blood with cold small beer !
Ah, thoughtless fair ! the tempting draught refuse,
When thus forewarn'd by my experienced Muse :
Let the sad consequence your thoughts employ,
Nor hazard future pains for present joy ;
Destruction lurks within the poisonous dose,
A fatal fever, or a pimpled nose.

Thus through each precept of the dancing art
The Muse has play'd the kind instructor's part ;
Through every maze her pupils she has led,
And pointed out the surest paths to tread.
No more remains ; no more the goddess sings,
But drops her pinions, and unfurls her wings ;
On downy beds the wearied dancers lie,
And sleep's silk cords tie down each drowsy eye ;
Delightful dreams their pleasing sports restore,
And e'en in sleep they seem to dance once more.

And now the work completely finish'd lies,
Which the devouring teeth of time defies :
Whilst birds in air, or fish in streams we find,
Or damsels fret with aged partners join'd ;
As long as nymphs shall with attentive ear
A fiddle rather than a sermon hear ;
So long the brightest eyes shall oft peruse
These useful lines of my instructive Muse ;
Each belle shall wear them wrote upon her fan,
And each bright beau shall read them—if he can.

A
TRANSLATION OF SOME LATIN VERSES
ON THE
CAMERA OBSCURA.

THE various powers of blended shade and light,
The skilful Zenxis of the dusky night ;
The lovely forms that paint the snowy plain
Free from the pencil's violating stain,
In tuneful lines, harmonious Phœbus, sing,
At once of light and verse celestial king.

Divine Apollo ! let thy sacred fire
Thy youthful bard's unskilful breast inspire,
Like the fair empty sheet he hangs to view,
Void and unfurnish'd, till inspired by you ;
O, let one beam, one kind enlightening ray
At once upon his mind and paper play !
Hence shall his breast with bright ideas glow,
Hence numerous forms the silver field shall strow.

But now the Muse's useful precepts view,
And with just care the pleasing work pursue.
First choose a window that convenient lies,
And to the north directs the wandering eyes ;
Dark be the room, let not a straggling ray
Intrude, to chase the shadowy forms away,
Except one bright, refulgent blaze, convey'd
Through a straight passage in the shutter made,
In which the' ingenious artist first must place
A little, convex, round, transparent glass,
And just behind the' extended paper lay,
On which his art shall all its power display :

There rays reflected from all parts shall meet,
And paint their objects on the silver sheet ;
A thousand forms shall in a moment rise,
And magic landscapes charm our wondering eyes ;
'Tis thus from every object that we view,
If Epicurus' doctrine teaches true,
The subtle parts upon our organs play,
And to our minds the' external forms convey.

But from what causes all these wonders flow,
'Tis not permitted idle bards to know,
How through the centre of the convex glass
The piercing rays together twisted pass ;
Or why reversed the lovely scenes appear,
Or why the sun's approaching light they fear ;
Let grave philosophers the cause inquire,
Enough for us to see and to admire.

See then what forms with various colours stain
The painted surface of the paper plain !
Now bright and gay, as shines the heavenly bow,
So late a wide unpeopled waste of snow :
Here verdant groves, there golden crops of corn
The new uncultivated fields adorn ;
Here gardens deck'd with flowers of various dyes,
There slender towers and little cities rise :
But all with tops inverted downward bend,
Earth mounts aloft, and skies and clouds descend :
Thus the wise vulgar on a pendent land
Imagine our antipodes to stand,
And wonder much how they securely go,
And not fall headlong on the heavens below.

The charms of motion here exalt each part
Above the reach of great Apelles' art ;
Zephyrs the waving harvest gently blow,
The waters curl, and brooks incessant flow ;

Men, beasts, and birds in fair confusion stray,
Some rise to sight, whilst others pass away.

On all we seize that comes within our reach,
The rolling coach we stop, the horseman catch;
Compel the posting traveller to stay;
But the short visit causes no delay.

Again, behold what lovely prospects rise!
Now with the loveliest feast your longing eyes,
Nor let strict modesty be here afraid,
To view upon her head a beauteous maid:
See in small folds her waving garments flow,
And all her slender limbs still slenderer grow;
Contracted in one little orb is found
The spacious hoop, once five vast ells around;
But think not to embrace the flying fair,
Soon will she quit your arms unseen as air,
In this resembling too a tender maid,
Coy to the lover's touch, and of his hand afraid.

Enough we've seen, now let the intruding day
Chase all the lovely magic scenes away;
Again the unpeopled snowy waste returns,
And the lone plain its faded glories mourns,
The bright creation in a moment flies,
And all the pigmy generation dies.

Thus, when still night her gloomy mantle spreads,
The fairies dance around the flowery meads!
But when the day returns, they wing their flight
To distant lands, and shun the unwelcome light.

EPISTLES.

AN EPISTLE FROM THE COUNTRY,

TO THE

Right Hon. Lord Lovelace¹ in Town.

SEPTEMBER, 1735.

IN days, my lord, when mother Time,
Though now grown old, was in her prime,
When Saturn first began to rule,
And Jove was hardly come from school,
How happy was a country life!
How free from wickedness and strife!
Then each man lived upon his farm,
And thought and did no mortal harm;
On mossy banks fair virgins slept,
As harmless as the flocks they kept;
Then love was all they had to do,
And nymphs were chaste, and swains were true.

But now, whatever poets write,
'Tis sure the case is alter'd quite;
Virtue no more in rural plains,
Or innocence, or peace remains;
But vice is in the cottage found,
And country girls are oft unsound;
Fierce party-rage each village fires,
With wars of justices and squires;

¹ Nevil Lord Lovelace was one of those with whom the author made a friendship on his first coming into the world, uninterrupted till his death, which happened at an early period of his life. He was a man of letters, a friend to the Muses, and highly fashioned according to the breeding of those days.

Attorneys, for a barley-straw,
Whole ages hamper folks in law,
And every neighbour's in a flame
About their rates, or tithes, or game:
Some quarrel for their hares and pigeons,
And some for difference in religions:
Some hold their parson the best preacher,
The tinker some a better teacher;
These, to the church they fight for strangers,
Have faith in nothing but her dangers;
While those, a more believing people,
Can swallow all things—but a steeple.

But I, my lord, who, as you know,
Care little how these matters go,
And equally detest the strife
And usual joys of country life,
Have, by good fortune, little share
Of its diversions or its care;
For seldom I with squires unite
Who hunt all day and drink all night;
Nor reckon wonderful inviting
A quarter sessions, or cock-fighting.
But then no farm I occupy,
With sheep to rot, and cows to die:
Nor rage I much, or much despair,
Though in my hedge I find a snare;
Nor view I with due admiration
All the high honours here in fashion;
The great commissions of the quorum,
Terrors to all who come before them;
Militia scarlet-edged with gold,
Or the white staff high-sheriffs hold;
The representative's caressing,
The judge's bow, the bishop's blessing;

Nor can I for my soul delight
In the dull feast of neighbouring knight,
Who, if you send three days before,
In white gloves meets you at the door,
With superfluity of breeding
First makes you sick, and then with feeding :
Or if, with ceremony cloy'd,
You would next time such plagues avoid,
And visit without previous notice,
' John, John, a coach!—I can't think who 'tis,'
My lady cries, who spies your coach,
Ere you the avenue approach ;
' Lord, how unlucky!—washing day!
And all the men are in the hay !'
Entrance to gain is something hard,
The dogs all bark, the gates are barr'd;
The yard's with lines of linen cross'd,
The hall door's lock'd, the key is lost :
These difficulties all o'ercome,
We reach, at length, the drawingroom ;
Then there's such trampling overhead,
Madam, you'd swear, was brought to bed ;
Miss in a hurry bursts her lock,
To get clean sleeves to hide her smock ;
The servants run, the pewter clatters,
My lady dresses, calls, and chatters ;
The cookmaid raves for want of butter,
Pigs squeak, fowls scream, and green geese flut-
Now after three hours tedious waiting, [ter.—
On all our neighbours' faults debating,
And having nine times view'd the garden,
In which there's nothing worth a farthing,
In comes my lady, and the pudding :
' You will excuse, sir,—on a sudden'—

Then, that we may have four and four,
The bacon, fowls, and cauliflower,
Their ancient unity divide,
The top one graces, one each side ;
And by and by the second course
Comes lagging like a distanced horse ;
A salver then to church and king,
The butler sweats, the glasses ring ;
The cloth removed, the toasts go round,
Bawdy and politics abound ;
And as the knight more tipsy waxes,
We damn all ministers and taxes.
At last the ruddy sun quite sunk,
The coachman tolerably drunk,
Whirling o'er hillocks, ruts, and stones,
Enough to dislocate one's bones,
We home return, a wondrous token
Of Heaven's kind care, with limbs unbroken.
Afflict us not, ye gods, though sinners,
With many days like this, or dinners!

But if civilities thus tease me,
Nor business nor diversions please me :
You'll ask, my lord, how time I spend?
I answer, with a book or friend :
The circulating hours dividing
'Twixt reading, walking, eating, riding ;
But books are still my highest joy,
These earliest please and latest cloy.
Sometimes o'er distant climes I stray,
By guides experienced taught the way ;
The wonders of each region view,
From frozen Lapland to Peru ;
Bound o'er rough seas, and mountains bare,
Yet ne'er forsake my elbow chair.

Sometimes some famed historian's pen
 Recalls past ages back again,
 Where all I see, through every page,
 Is but how men, with senseless rage,
 Each other rob, destroy, and burn,
 To serve a priest's or statesman's turn;
 Though loaded with a different aim,
 Yet always asses much the same.

Sometimes I view, with much delight,
 Divines their holy gamecocks fight;
 Here faith and work at variance set,
 Strive hard who shall the victory get;
 Presbytery and episcopacy
 They fight so long, it would amaze ye:
 Here free will holds a fierce dispute
 With reprobation absolute;
 There sense kicks transubstantiation,
 And reason pecks at revelation.

With learned Newton now I fly
 O'er all the rolling orbs on high,
 Visit new worlds, and for a minute
 This old one scorn, and all that's in it:
 And now with labouring Boyle I trace
 Nature through every winding maze,
 The latent qualities admire
 Of vapours, water, air, and fire:
 With pleasing admiration see
 Matter's surprising subtilty;
 As how the smallest lamp displays
 For miles around its scatter'd rays;
 Or how (the case still more to' explain)
 A f—t², that weighs not half a grain,
 The atmosphere will oft perfume
 Of a whole spacious drawingroom.

² See Boyle's Experiments.

Sometimes I pass a whole long day
In happy indolence away,
In fondly meditating o'er
Past pleasures, and in hoping more :
Or wander through the fields and woods,
And gardens bathed in circling floods,
There blooming flowers with rapture view,
And sparkling gems of morning dew,
Whence in my mind ideas rise
Of Celia's cheeks, and Chloe's eyes.

'Tis thus, my lord, I, free from strife,
Spend an inglorious country life ;
These are the joys I still pursue,
When absent from the town and you ;
Thus pass long summer suns away,
Busily idle, calmly gay :
Nor great, nor mean, nor rich, nor poor,
Not having much, nor wishing more ;
Except that you, when weary grown
Of all the follies of the town,
And seeing, in all public places,
The same vain fops and painted faces,
Would sometimes kindly condescend
To visit a dull country friend :
Here you'll be ever sure to meet
A hearty welcome, though no treat,
One who has nothing else to do,
But to divert himself and you :
A house, where quiet guards the door,
No rural wits smoke, drink, and roar,
Choice books, safe horses, wholesome liquor,
Clean girls, backgammon, and the vicar.

THE
FIRST EPISTLE

OF THE
SECOND BOOK OF HORACE, IMITATED.

To the Right Hon. Philip Lord Hardwicke,
LORD HIGH CHANCELLOR OF GREAT BRITAIN. 1748.

Advertisement.

THE following piece is a burlesque imitation: a species of poetry, whose chief excellence consists in a lucky and humorous application of the words and sentiments of any author to a new subject totally different from the original. This is what is usually forgot both by the writers and readers of these kind of compositions; the first of whom are apt to strike out new and independent thoughts of their own, and the latter to admire such injudicious excrescences: these immediately lose sight of their original, and those scarce ever cast an eye towards him at all. It is thought proper therefore to advertise the reader, that in the following Epistle he is to expect nothing more than an apposite conversion of the serious sentiments of Horace on the Roman poetry into more ludicrous ones on the subject of English politics; and if he thinks it not worth while to compare it line for line with the original, he will find in it neither wit, humour, nor even common sense; all the little merit it can pretend to consisting solely in the closeness of so long and uninterrupted an imitation.

THE
FIRST EPISTLE

OF THE

SECOND BOOK OF HORACE, IMITATED.

WHILST you, my lord, such various toils sustain,
Preside o'er Britain's peers, her laws explain,
With every virtue every heart engage,
And live the bright example of the age,
With tedious verse to trespass on your time
Is, sure, impertinence, if not a crime.

All the famed heroes, statesmen, admirals,
Who after death within the sacred walls
Of Westminster, with kings have been received,
Met with but sorry treatment while they lived;
And though they labour'd in their country's cause,
With arms defended her, and form'd with laws,
Yet ever mourn'd they till'd a barren soil,
And left the world ungrateful to their toil.
E'en he¹, who long the House of Commons led,
That hydra dire with many a gaping head,
Found by experience, to his latest breath,
Envy could only be subdued by death.
Great men, whilst living, must expect disgraces;
Dead, they're adored—when none desire their
places.

This common fate, my lord, attends not you,
Above all equal, and all envy too;
With such unrival'd eminence you shine
That in this truth alone all parties join,

¹ Sir Robert Walpole.

The seat of justice in no former reign
Was e'er so greatly fill'd, nor ever can again.

But though the people are so just to you,
To none besides will they allow their due,
No minister approve, who is not dead,
Nor till he 'as lost it own he had a head;
Yet such respect they bear to ancient things,
They've some for former ministers and kings;
And, with a kind of superstitious awe,
Deem Magna Charter still a sacred law.

But if, because the government was best
Of old in France, when freedom she possess'd,
In the same scale resolved to weigh our own,
England's we judge was so, who then had none;
Into most strange absurdities we fall,
Unworthy to be reason'd with at all.
Brought to perfection in these days we see
All arts, and their great parent Liberty;
With skill profound we sing, eat, dress, and dance,
And in each goût polite excel e'en France.

If age of ministers is then the test,
And, as of wines, the oldest are the best,
Let's try and fix some era, if we can,
When good ones were extinct and bad began;
Are they all wicked since Eliza's days?
Did none in Charles' or James's merit praise?
Or are they knaves but since the Revolution?
If none of these are facts, then all's confusion;
And by the selfsame rule one cannot fail
To pluck each hair out singly from the tail.

Wise Cecil, loved by people and by prince,
As often broke his word as any since:
Of Arthur's days we almost nothing know,
Yet sing their praise, because they're long ago.

Oft as 'tis doubted in their several ways
Which of past orators best merit praise,
We find it to decide extremely hard,
If Harley's head deserved the most regard,
Or Windham's tongue, or Jekyl's patriot heart,
Old Shippen's gravity, or Walpole's art.
These were adored by all with whom they voted,
And in the fullest houses still are quoted;
These have been famed from Anna's days till ours,
When Pelham has improved, with unknown
The art of ministerial eloquence, [powers,
By adding honest truth to nervous sense.
Oft are the vulgar wrong, yet sometimes right!
The late rebellion in the truest light
By chance they saw; but were not once so wise,
Unknown, unheard, in damning the excise:
If former reigns they fancy had no fault,
I think their judgment is not worth a groat;
But if they frankly own their politics,
Like ours, might have some blunders and some
With such impartial sentiments I join, [tricks,
And their opinions tally just with mine.

I would by no means church or king destroy,
And yet the doctrines, taught me when a boy
By Crab the curate, now seem wondrous odd,
That either came immediately from God:
In all the writings of those high flown ages
You meet with now and then some scatter'd pages
Wrote with some spirit and with sense enough;
These sell the book, the rest is wretched stuff:
I'm quite provoked, when principles, though true,
Must stand impeach'd by fools, because they're
new.

Should I but question, only for a joke,
 If all was flowers when pompous Hanmer spoke,
 If things went right when St. John trod the stage,
 How the old Tories all would storm and rage!
 They shun conviction, or because a truth
 Confess'd in age implies they err'd in youth;
 Or that they scorn to learn of junior wits:
 What!—to be taught by Lytteltons and Pitts.

When angry patriots, or in prose or rhymes,
 Extol the virtuous deeds of former times,
 They only mean the present to disgrace,
 And look with envious hate on all in place:
 But had the patriots of those ancient days
 Play'd the same game for profit or for praise,
 The trade, though now so flourishing and new,
 Had long been ruin'd and the nation too.

England, when once of peace and wealth pos-
 Began to think frugality a jest, [sess'd,
 So grew polite; hence all her well bred heirs
 Gamesters and jockeys turn'd, and cricket players;
 Pictures and busts in every house were seen;
 What should have paid the butcher bought
 Poussin;

Now operas, now plays were all the fashion,
 Then whist became the business of the nation,
 That, like a froward child, in wanton play
 Now cries for toys, then tosses them away;
 Each hour we changed our pleasures, dress, and
 diet;

These were the bless'd effects of being quiet.

Not thus behaved the true old English squire,
 He smoked his pipe each morn by his own fire,
 There justice to dispense was ever willing,
 And for his warrants pick'd up many a shilling:

To teach his younger neighbours always glad,
Where for their corn best markets might be had,
And from experienced age as glad to learn
How to defraud unseen the parson's barn.

But now the world's quite alter'd, all are bent
To leave their seats, and fly to parliament :
Old men and boys in this alone agree,
And, vainly courting popularity,
Ply their obstreperous voters all night long
With bumpers, toasts, and now and then a song :
E'en I, who swear these follies I despise,
Than statesmen, or their porters, tell more lies ;
And, for the fashion sake, in spite of nature,
Commence sometimes a most important creature,
Busy as Car——w, rave for ink and quills,
And stuff my head and pockets full of bills.

Few landmen go to sea unless they're press'd,
And quacks in all professions are a jest ;
None dare to kill, except most learn'd physicians :
Learn'd or unlearn'd, we all are politicians.
There's not a soul but thinks, could he be sent,
He' has parts enough to shine in parliament.

Though many ills this modern taste produces,
Yet still, my lord, 'tis not without its uses ;
Those minor politicians are a kind
Not much to selfish avarice inclined ;
Do but allow them with applause to speak,
They little care, though all their tenants break ;
They form intrigues with no man's wife or daughter,
And live on pudding, chicken-broth, and water ;
Fierce Jacobites, as far as blustering words,
But loath in any cause to draw their swords.

Were smaller matters worthy of attention,
A thousand other uses I could mention ;

For instance, in each monthly magazine
Their essays and orations still are seen,
And magazines teach boys and girls to read,
And are the canons of each tradesman's creed;
Apprentices they serve to entertain,
Instead of smutty tales and plays profane;
Instruct them how their passions to command,
And to hate none—but those who rule the land:
Facts they record, births, marriages, and deaths,
Sometimes receipts for claps and stinking breaths.

When with her brothers miss comes up to town,
How for each play can she afford a crown?
Where find diversions gratis, and yet pretty,
Unless she goes to church or a committee?
And sure committees better entertain
Than hearing a dull parson pray for rain,
Or, whining, beg deliverance from battle,
Dangers and sins, and sickness amongst cattle;
At church she hears with unattentive ear
The prayers for peace, and for a plenteous year,
But here quite charm'd with so much wit and sense,
She falls a victim soon to eloquence;
Well may she fall, since eloquence has power
To govern both the upper house and lower.

Our ancient gentry, frugal, bold, and rough,
Were farmers, yet lived happily enough;
They, when in barns their corn was safely laid,
For harvest-homes great entertainments made;
The well rubb'd tables crack'd with beef and pork,
And all the supper shared who shared the work;
This gave freeholders first a taste for eating,
And was the source of all election treating;
A while their jests, though merry, yet were wise,
And they took none but decent liberties.

Brandy and punch at length such riots bred,
No sober family could sleep in bed:
All were alarm'd, e'en those who had no hurt
Call'd in the law to stop such dangerous sport.
Rich citizens at length new arts brought down
With ready cash, to win each country town;
This less disorders caused than downright drink,
Freemen grew civil, and began to think;
But still, all canvassing produced confusion,
The relics of its rustic institution.

'Tis but of late, since thirty years of peace
To useful sciences have given increase,
That we've inquired how Rome's lost sons of old
Barter'd their liberties for feasts and gold;
What treats proud Sylla, Cæsar, Crassus gave,
And tried, like them, to buy each hungry knave;
Nor tried in vain; too fortunately bold
Many have purchased votes, and many sold;
No laws can now amend this venal land,
That dreads the touch of a reforming hand.

Some think an interest may be form'd with ease,
Because the vulgar we must chiefly please;
But for that reason 'tis the harder task,
For such will neither pardon grant, nor ask.
See how Sir W——, master of this art,
By different methods wins each C——n heart.
He tells raw youths that whoring is no harm,
And teaches their attentive sires to farm;
To his own table lovingly invites
Insidious pimps and hungry parasites;
Sometimes in slippers and a morning gown,
He pays his early visits round a town,
At every house relates his stories over,
Of place-bills, taxes, turnips, and Hanover;

If tales will money save, and business do,
It matters little are they false or true.

‘Whoe’er prefers a clamorous mob’s applause
To his own conscience or his country’s cause
Is soon elated, and as soon cast down
By every drunken cobbler’s smile or frown:
So small a matter can depress or raise
A mind that’s meanly covetous of praise:
But if my quiet must dependent be
On the vain breath of popularity,
A wind each hour to different quarters veering,
Adieu, say I, to all electioneering.

The boldest orator it disconcerts,
To find the many, though of meanest parts,
Illiterate, squabbling, discontented prigs,
Fitter to attend a boxing match at Figg’s,
To all good sense and reason shut their ears,
Yet take delight in S—d—n’s bulls and bears.

Young knights now sent from many a distant
shire

Are better pleased with what they see than hear;
Their joy’s to view his majesty approach,
Drawn by eight milk white steeds in gilded coach,
The pageant show and bustle to behold, [gold;
The guards, both horse and foot, laced o’er with
The rich insignia from the Tower brought down,
The ivory sceptre and the radiant crown.
The mob huzza, the thundering cannons roar,
And business is delay’d at least an hour;
The Speaker calls indeed to mind what passes,
But might as well read orders to deaf asses.

But now see honest V—— rise to joke!
The house all laugh; What says he? has he spoke?
No, not a word. Then whence this sudden mirth?
His phiz foretells some jest’s approaching birth.

But, lest I seem these orators to wrong,
Envious because I share no gift of tongue,
Is there a man whose eloquence has power
To clear the fullest house in half an hour,
Who now appears to rave and now to weep,
Who sometimes makes us swear, and sometimes
sleep,

Now fills our heads with false alarms from France,
Then, conjurerlike, to India bids us dance?
All eulogies on him we own are true,
For surely he does all that man can do.

But whilst, my lord, these makers of our laws
Thus *speak* themselves into the world's applause,
Let bards, for such attempts too modest, share
What more they prize, your patronage and care,
If you would spur them up the Muses' hill,
Or ask their aid your library to fill.

We poets are, in every age and nation,
A most absurd, wrong-headed generation;
This in a thousand instances is shown
(Myself as guilty as the rest I own),
As when on you our nonsense we impose,
Tired with the nonsense you have heard in prose;
When we're offended, if some honest friend
Presumes one unharmonious verse to mend;
When undesired our labours we repeat,
Grieve they're no more regarded by the great,
And fancy, should you once but see our faces,
You'd bid us write, and pay us all with places.

'Tis yours, my lord, to form my soul to verse,
Who have such numerous virtues to rehearse:
Great Alexander once, in ancient days,
Paid Chœrilus for daubing him with praise;
And yet the same famed hero made a law,—
None but Apelles should his picture draw;

None but Lysippus cast his royal head
In brass ; it had been treason if in lead :
A prince he was in valour ne'er surpass'd,
And had in painting too perhaps some taste ;
But as to verse, undoubted is the matter,
He must be dull as a Dutch commentator.

But you, my lord, a favourite of the Muse,
Would choose good poets, were there good to
choose ;

You know they paint the great man's soul as like
As can his features Kneller or Vandyke.
Had I such power, I never would compose
Such creeping lines as these, nor verse nor prose ;
But rather try to celebrate your praise,
And with your just encomiums swell my lays :
Had I a genius equal to my will,
Gladly would I exert my utmost skill
To consecrate to fame Britannia's land
Receiving law from your impartial hand ;
By your wise counsels once more powerful made,
Her fleets revered, and flourishing her trade ;
Exhausted nations trembling at her sword,
And peace², long wish'd for, to the world restored.

But your true greatness suffers no such praise,
My verse would sink the theme it meant to raise ;
Unequal to the task would surely meet
Deserved contempt, and each presumptuous sheet
Could serve for nothing, scrawl'd with lines so
simple,

Unless to wrap up sugar-loaves for Wimple³.

² A general peace was at that time just concluded at Aix la Chapelle.

³ The seat of Lord Hardwicke, in Cambridgeshire.

TO THE RIGHT HON. THE

LADY M. CAVENDISH HARLEY¹,

Presented with a Collection of Poems.

THE tuneful throng was ever beauty's care,
And verse a tribute sacred to the fair;
Hence in each age the loveliest nymph has been,
By undisputed right, the Muses queen;
Her smiles have all poetic bosoms fired,
And patronised the verse themselves inspired:
Lesbia presided thus in Roman times,
Thus Sacharissa reign'd o'er British rhymes,
And present bards to Margaretta bow,
For what they were of old is Harley now.

From Oxford's house, in these dull busy days,
Alone we hope for patronage or praise;
He to our slighted labours still is kind,
Beneath his roof we're ever sure to find
(Reward sufficient for the world's neglect)
Charms to inspire, and goodness to protect;
Your eyes with rapture animate our lays,
Your sire's kind hand uprears our drooping bays;

¹ Lady Margaret Cavendish Harley was the only daughter and heiress of Edward Earl of Oxford and Mortimer, by his wife the Lady Henrietta Cavendish, sole daughter and heiress of John Holles, Duke of Newcastle. She married William the second Duke of Portland, July 11, 1734, who died on the 1st of May, 1762; her Grace, surviving him, departed this life at her seat at Bulstrode, on Monday the 18th of June, 1785.

Form'd for our glory and support, ye seem,
 Our constant patron he, and you our theme,
 Where should poetic homage then be paid?
 Where every verse, but at your feet, be laid?
 A double right you to this empire bear,
 As first in beauty, and as Oxford's heir.

Illustrious maid! in whose sole person join'd
 Every perfection of the fair we find,
 Charms that might warrant all her sex's pride,
 Without one foible of her sex to hide;
 Good nature artless as the bloom that dyes
 Her cheeks, and wit as piercing as her eyes.
 Oh, Harley! could but you these lines approve,
 These children sprung from idleness and love,
 Could they (but ah, how vain is the design!)
 Hope to amuse your hours, as once they've mine,
 The' ill judging world's applause, and critic's
 blame,
 Alike I'd scorn: your approbation's fame.

HORACE, BOOK II. ODE XVI.

IMITATED.

TO THE

Hon. Philip Yorke, Esq.

SOON AFTER THE GENERAL ELECTION IN 1747.

FOR quiet, Yorke, the sailor cries,
 When gathering storms obscure the skies,
 The stars no more appearing;
 The candidate for quiet prays,
 Sick of the bumpers and huzzas
 Of bless'd electioneering.

Who thinks that from the Speaker's chair
The Serjeant's mace can keep off care,

Is wondrously mistaken :

Alas ! he is not half so bless'd
As those who've liberty and rest,
And dine on beans and bacon.

Why should we then to London run,
And quit our cheerful country sun
For business, dirt, and smoke ?

Can we, by changing place and air,
Ourselves get rid of, or our care !

In troth, 'tis all a joke.

Care climbs proud ships of mightiest force,
And mounts behind the general's horse,

Outstrips hussars and pandours ;
Far swifter than the bounding hind,
Swifter than clouds before the wind,
Or Cope¹ before the' Highlanders.

A man, when once he's safely chose,
Should laugh at all his threatening foes,

Nor think of future evil :

Each good has its attendant ill ;
A seat is no bad thing, but still
Elections are the devil.

Its gifts, with hand impartial, Heaven
Divides : to Orford it was given

To die in fullblown glory ;
To Bath, indeed, a longer date,
But then with unrelenting hate
Pursued by Whig and Tory.

¹ General Cope, in the year 1745, made a very precipitate retreat, before the rebel army, from Preston Pans to Edinburgh.

The gods to you with bounteous hand
 Have granted seats, and parks, and land;
 Brocades and silks you wear;
 With claret and ragouts you treat,
 Six neighing steeds with nimble feet
 Whirl on your gilded car.

To me they've given a small retreat,
 Good port, and mutton, best of meat,
 With broad-cloth on my shoulders,
 A soul that scorns a dirty job,
 Loves a good rhyme, and hates a mob,
 I mean who a'n't freeholders.

HORACE, BOOK IV. ODE VIII.

IMITATED.

To the same.

DID but kind fate to me impart
 Wealth equal to my generous heart,
 Some curious gift to every friend,
 A token of my love, I'd send;
 But still the choicest and the best
 Should be consign'd to friends at Wrest¹.

An organ, which, if right I guess,
 Would best please lady Marchioness,
 Should first be sent by my command,
 Worthy of her inspiring hand:
 To Lady Bell of nicest mould
 A coral set in burnish'd gold:

¹ The seat of the Marchioness of Kent, wife of Lord Hardwicke.

To you, well knowing what you like,
Portraits by Lely or Vandyke,
A curious bronze, or bust antique.

But since these gifts exceed my power,
And you, who need not wish for more,
Already bless'd with all that's fine,
Are pleased with verse, though such as mine;
As poets used in ancient times,
I'll make my presents all in rhymes;
And, lest you should forget their worth,
Like them I'll set their value forth.

Not monumental brass or stones,
The guardians of heroic bones,
Not victories won by Marlbro's sword,
Nor titles which these feats record,
Such glories o'er the dead diffuse,
As can the labours of the Muse.
But if she should her aid deny,
With you your virtues all must die,
Nor tongues unborn shall ever say—
How wise, how good was Lady Grey!

What now had been the' ignoble doom
Of him who built imperial Rome?
Or him, deserving ten times more,
Who fed the hungry, clothed the poor,
Clear'd streams, and bridges laid across,
And built the little church of Ross?
Did not the' eternal powers of verse
From age to age their deeds rehearse.

The Muse forbids the brave to die,
Bestowing immortality:

Still by her aid in bless'd abodes
Alcides feasts among the gods;
And royal Arthur still is able
To fill his hospitable table
With English beef, and English knights,
And looks with pity down on White's.

TO THE

HONOURABLE MISS YORKE,

On her Marriage to Lord Anson.

VICTORIOUS Anson see returns
From the subjected main!
With joy each British bosom burns,
Fearless of France and Spain.

Honours his grateful sovereign's hand,
Conquest his own bestows,
Applause unfeign'd his native land,
Unenvied wealth her foes.

' But still, my son (Britannia cries),
Still more thy merits claim;
Thy deeds deserve a richer prize
Than titles, wealth, or fame:

' Twice wafted safe from pole to pole
Thou' hast sail'd the globe around;
Contains it aught can charm thy soul,
Thy fondest wishes bound?

‘ Is there a treasure worth thy care
 Within the’ encircling line?
 Say, and I’ll weary Heaven with prayer
 To make that treasure thine.’

Heaven listen’d to Britannia’s voice;
 Agreed that more was due:
 He chose—the gods approved his choice,
 And paid him all in you.

TO THE RIGHT HON.

THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD,

ON HIS

‘ Being installed Knight of the Garter ¹.

THESE trophies, Stanhope, of a lovely dame,
 Once the bright object of a monarch’s flame,
 Who with such just propriety can wear,
 As thou the darling of the gay and fair?
 See every friend to wit, politeness, love,
 With one consent thy sovereign’s choice approve!
 And lived Plantagenet her voice to join,
 Herself, and Garter, both were surely thine.

¹ Lord Chesterfield was installed at Windsor, June 18, 1730, at the same time with William Duke of Cumberland and Richard Earl of Burlington.

MISCELLANIES.

ON SEEING THE EARL OF CHESTERFIELD AT A BALL, AT BATH.

1770.

IN times by selfishness and faction sour'd,
 When dull Importance has all wit devour'd;
 When Rank, as if to' insult alone design'd,
 Affects a proud seclusion from mankind;
 And Greatness, to all social converse dead,
 Esteems it dignity to be ill bred:—
 See! Chesterfield alone resists the tide,
 Above all party, and above all pride, [grace,
 Vouchsafes each night these brilliant scenes to
 Augments and shares the'amusements of the place;
 Admires the fair, enjoys the sprightly ball,
 Deigns to be pleased, and therefore pleases all.
 Hence, though unable now this style to hit,
 Learn what was once politeness, ease, and wit.

WRITTEN AT THE COUNTESS OF SALISBURY'S ASSEMBLY.

1787.

FROM Salisbury's Garter dropp'd, the' historian
 The' illustrious Order so entitled rose! [knows,
 Another Salisbury now our bosoms warms,
 With equal elegance and equal charms.

Let then her form, her trophies, and her name,
 With justice be consign'd to equal fame ;
 Let Kings with no less pride her Garter wear,
 Then every noble Knight may have a pair.

THE MODERN FINE GENTLEMAN.

1746.

Quale portentum neque militaris
 Daunia in latis alit escaletis,
 Nec Jubæ tellus generat, leonum
 Arida nutrix. HOR.

JUST broke from school, pert, impudent, and raw,
 Expert in Latin, more expert in taw,
 His Honour posts o'er Italy and France,
 Measures St. Peter's dome, and learns to dance.
 Thence, having quick through various countries
 flown,

Glean'd all their follies and exposed his own,
 He back returns, a thing so strange all o'er
 As never ages past produced before :
 A monster of such complicated worth,
 As no one single clime could e'er bring forth ;
 Half atheist, papist, gamester, bubble, rook,
 Half fiddler, coachman, dancer, groom, and cook.

Next, because business is now all the vogue,
 And who'd be quite polite must be a rogue,
 In parliament he purchases a seat,
 To make the' accomplish'd gentleman complete.
 There, safe in self-sufficient impudence,
 Without experience, honesty, or sense,
 Unknowing in her interest, trade, or laws,
 He vainly undertakes his country's cause :

Thus poor in wealth, he labours to no end,
 Wretched alone, in crowds without a friend;
 Insensible to all that's good or kind,
 Deaf to all merit, to all beauty blind;
 For love too busy, and for wit too grave,
 A harden'd, sober, proud, luxurious knave;
 By little actions striving to be great,
 And proud to be, and to be thought, *a cheat*.

And yet in this so bad is his success,
 That as his fame improves, his rents grow less;
 On parchment wings his acres take their flight,
 And his unpeopled groves admit the light;
 With his estate his interest too is done,
 His honest borough seeks a warmer sun;
 For him, now cash and liquor flows no more,
 His independent voters cease to roar:
 And Britain soon must want the great defence
 Of all his honesty and eloquence,
 But that the generous youth, more anxious grown
 For public liberty than for his own,
 Marries some jointured antiquated crone;
 And boldly, when his country is at stake,
 Braves the deep yawning gulf, like Curtius, for
 its sake.

Quickly again distress'd for want of coin,
 He digs no longer in the' exhausted mine,
 But seeks preferment, as the last resort,
 Cringes each morn at levees, bows at court,
 And, from the hand he hates, implores support:
 The minister, well pleased at small expense
 To silence so much rude impertinence,
 With squeeze and whisper yields to his demands,
 And on the venal list enroll'd he stands;
 A ribbon and a pension buy the slave,
 This bribes the fool about him, that the knave

And now arrived at his meridian glory
 He sinks apace, despised by Whig and Tory;
 Of independence now he talks no more,
 Nor shakes the senate with his patriot roar,
 But silent votes, and, with court-trappings hung,
 Eyes his own glittering star, and holds his tongue.
 In craft political a bankrupt made,
 He sticks to gaming, as the surer trade;
 Turns downright sharper, lives by sucking blood,
 And grows, in short, the very thing he would:
 Hunts out young heirs, who have their fortunes
 spent,
 And lends them ready cash at cent. per cent.
 Lays wagers on his own and others' lives,
 Fights uncles, fathers, grandmothers, and wives,
 Till death at length, indignant to be made
 The daily subject of his sport and trade,
 Veils with his sable hand the wretch's eyes,
 And, groaning for the bets he loses by't, *he dies.*

THE MODERN FINE LADY.

1750.

————— Miseri, quibus
 Intentata nites. HOR.

SKILL'D in each art that can adorn the fair,
 The sprightly dance, the soft Italian air,
 The toss of quality and high-bred fleer,
 Now Lady Harriot reach'd her fifteenth year:
 Wing'd with diversions all her moments flew,
 Each, as it pass'd, presenting something new:

Breakfasts and auctions wear the morn away,
Each evening gives an opera or a play ;
Then Brag's eternal joys all night remain,
And kindly usher in the morn again.

For love no time has she, or inclination,
Yet must coquet it for the sake of fashion ;
For this she listens to each fop that's near,
The' embroider'd colonel flatters with a sneer,
And the cropp'd ensign nuzzles in her ear.
But with most warmth her dress and airs inspire
The' ambitious bosom of the landed squire,
Who fain would quit plump Dolly's softer charms,
For wither'd, lean, *right honourable* arms ;
He bows with reverence at her sacred shrine,
And treats her as if sprung from race divine ;
Which she returns with insolence and scorn,
Nor deigns to smile on a plebeian born.

Ere long, by friends, by cards, and lovers cross'd,
Her fortune, health, and reputation lost ;
Her money gone, yet not a tradesman paid ;
Her fame, yet she still damn'd to be a maid ;
Her spirits sink, her nerves are so unstrung,
She weeps, if but a handsome thief is hung :
By mercers, lacemen, mantua-makers press'd,
But most for ready cash for play distress'd,
Where can she turn?—The squire must all re-
She condescends to listen to his prayer, [pair,
And marries him at length in mere despair.

But soon the' endearments of a husband cloy,
Her soul, her frame, incapable of joy :
She feels no transports in the bridal bed,
Of which so oft she' has heard, so much has read ;

¹ Some of the brightest eyes were at this time in tears for one Maclean, condemned for a robbery on the highway.

Then vex'd, that she should be condemn'd alone
 To seek in vain this philosophic stone,
 To abler tutors she resolves to' apply,
 A prostitute from curiosity:
 Hence men of every sort, and every size,
² Impatient for heaven's cordial drop, she tries;
 The fribbling beau, the rough unwieldy clown,
 The ruddy Templar newly on the town,
 The' Hibernian captain of gigantic make,
 The brimful parson, and the' exhausted rake.

But still malignant fate her wish denies,
 Cards yield superior joys, to cards she flies;
 All night from rout to rout her chairmen run,
 Again she plays, and is again undone.

Behold her now in ruin's frightful jaws!
 Bonds, judgments, executions ope their paws;
 Seize jewels, furniture, and plate, nor spare
 The gilded chariot, or the tassel'd chair;
 For lonely seat she's forced to quit the town,
 And Tubbs³ conveys the wretched exile down.

Now rumbling o'er the stones of Tyburn Road⁴,
 Ne'er press'd with a more grieved or guilty load,
 She bids adieu to all the well known streets,
 And envies every cinder wench she meets:
 And now the dreaded country first appears;
 With sighs unfeign'd the dying noise she hears
 Of distant coaches fainter by degrees,
 Then starts, and trembles at the sight of trees.

² The cordial drop heaven in our cup has thrown,
 To make the nauseous draught of life go down.

ROCH.

³ A person well known for supplying people of quality
 with hired equipages.

⁴ Now Oxford Street.

Silent and sullen, like some captive queen,
She's drawn along, unwilling to be seen,
Until at length appears the ruin'd Hall
Within the grass-green moat and ivied wall,
The doleful prison where for ever she,
But not, alas! her griefs must buried be.

Her coach the curate and the tradesmen meet,
Greatcoated tenants her arrival greet,
And boys with stubble bonfires light the street;
While bells her ears with tongues discordant grate,
Types of the nuptial ties they celebrate:
But no rejoicings can unbend her brow,
Nor deigns she to return one awkward bow,
But bounces in, disdaining once to speak,
And wipes the trickling tear from off her cheek.

Now see her in the sad decline of life,
A peevish mistress, and a sulky wife;
Her nerves unbraced, her faded cheek grown pale
With many a real, many a fancied ail;
Of cards, admirers, equipage bereft,
Her insolence and title only left;
Severely humbled to her one horse chair,
And the low pastimes of a country fair:
Too wretched to endure one lonely day,
Too proud one friendly visit to repay,
Too indolent to read, too criminal to pray.
At length half dead, half mad, and quite confined,
Shunning, and shunn'd by all of humankind,
E'en robb'd of the last comfort of her life,
Insulting the poor curate's callous wife,
Pride, disappointed pride now stops her breath,
And with true scorpion rage she stings herself to
death.

THE
SQUIRE AND THE PARSON.

An Eclogue.

WRITTEN ON THE CONCLUSION OF THE PEACE, 1748.

By his hall chimney, where in rusty grate
Green faggots wept their own untimely fate,
In elbowchair, the pensive Squire reclined,
Revolving debts and taxes in his mind:
A pipe just fill'd upon a table near
Lay by the London Evening¹ stain'd with beer,
With half a Bible, on whose remnants torn
Each parish round was annually forsworn.
The gate now claps, as evening just grew dark,
Tray starts, and with a growl prepares to bark;
But soon discerning, with sagacious nose,
The well known savour of the parson's toes,
Lays down his head, and sinks in soft repose:
The doctor, entering, to the tankard ran,
Takes a good hearty pull, and thus began —

PARSON.

Why sit'st thou thus, forlorn and dull, my friend,
Now war's rapacious reign is at an end?
Hark, how the distant bells inspire delight!
See bonfires spangle o'er the veil of night!

SQUIRE.

What's peace, alas! in foreign parts to me?
At home, nor peace nor plenty can I see;

¹ The London Evening Post; the only paper at that time taken in and read by the enemies to the House of Hanover.

Vent impious jokes on every sacred thing.

SQUIRE.

Come, drink;—

PARSON.

Here's to you then, to church and king.

SQUIRE.

Here's church and king; I hate the glass should
stand,
Though one takes tithes, and the' other taxes land.

PARSON.

Heaven with new plagues will scourge this sin-
ful nation,
Unless you soon repeal the toleration,
And to the church restore the convocation.

SQUIRE.

Plagues we should feel sufficient, on my word,
Starved by two houses, priest-rid by a third :
For better days we lately had a chance,
Had not the honest Plaids been trick'd by France.

PARSON.

Is not most gracious George our faith's defender?
You love the church, yet wish for the Pretender!

SQUIRE.

Preferment, I suppose, is what you mean;
Turn Whig, and you, perhaps, may be a dean :
But you must first learn how to treat your betters.
What's here? sure, some strange news, a boy
with letters !

Oh, ho! here's one, I see, from Parson Sly:—
 'My reverend neighbour Squab being like to die,
 I hope, if Heaven should please to take him hence,
 To ask the living would be no offence.'

PARSON.

Have you not sworn that I should Squab succeed?
 Think how for this I taught your sons to read;
 How oft discover'd puss on new-plough'd land,
 How oft supported you with friendly hand;
 When I could scarcely go, nor could your wor-
 ship stand.

SQUIRE.

'Twas yours, had you been honest, wise, or civil;
 Now, e'en go court the bishops, or the devil.

PARSON.

If I meant any thing, now let me die;
 I'm blunt, and cannot fawn and cant, not I,
 Like that old presbyterian rascal Sly.
 I am, you know, a right true-hearted Tory,
 Love a good glass, a merry song, or story.

SQUIRE.

Thou art an honest dog, that's truth indeed—
 Talk no more nonsense then about the creed.
 I can't, I think, deny thy first request;
 'Tis thine; but first a bumper to the best.

PARSON.

Most noble Squire, more generous than your wine,
 How pleasing's the condition you assign!
 Give me the sparkling glass, and here, d'ye see,
 With joy I drink it on my bended knee:—

Great queen! who governest this earthly ball,
 And makest both kings and kingdoms rise and fall;
 Whose wondrous power in secret all things rules,
 Makes fools of mighty peers, and peers of fools;
 Dispenses mitres, coronets, and stars;
 Involves far distant realms in bloody wars,
 Then bids War's snaky tresses cease to hiss,
 And gives them peace again—nay, gave us this²:
 Whose health does health to all mankind impart,
 Here's to thy much loved health:—

SQUIRE, *rubbing his hands.*

—With all my heart.

A DIALOGUE

BETWEEN THE

Right Hon. Henry Pelham and Madam Popularity¹.

IN IMITATION OF HORACE, BOOK III. ODE IX.

H. PELHAM.

WHILST I was pleasing in your eyes,
 And you were constant, chaste, and wise;
 Ere yet you had your favours granted
 To every knave or fool who canted,
 In peaceful joy I pass'd each hour,
 Nor envied Walpole's wealth and power.

² Madame de Pompadour.

¹ From the commencement of the Spanish war in 1739, to the treaty of Aix la Chapelle, signed Oct. 7, 1748, the land-tax was raised from 2s. to 4s. In 1749 it was lowered to 3s.; at which rate it was continued till 1752, when Mr. Pelham, at that time the minister, reduced it to 2s. at which rate it continued till the time of his death in 1754.

MADAM POPULARITY.

While I possess'd your love alone,
My heart and voice were all your own;
But on my soul 'twould vex a saint,
When I've most reason for complaint,
To hear you thus begin to scold:
Think on Britannia! proud and old!
Are not her interests all your theme,
Your daily labour, nightly dream?

H. PELHAM.

My just regard I can't deny
For her and her prosperity;
Nor am ashamed it is so great
That, to deliver her from debt,
From foreign wars and civil strife,
I'd freely sacrifice my life.

MADAM POPULARITY.

To her your warmest vows are plighted,
For her I every day am slighted;
Her welfare always is preferr'd,
And my neglected voice unheard:
Examples numerous I could mention,
A peace! bad as the old convention;
Money reduced to three per cent.
No pity on the poor who lent;
Armies that must for ever stand,
And still three shillings laid on land.

H. PELHAM.

Suppose now, madam, I was willing,
For once, to bate this grievous shilling,

To humour you—I know 'tis wrong,
But you have such a cursed tongue.

MADAM POPULARITY.

Why then, though rough as winds or seas,
You scorn all little arts to please,
Yet thou art honest, faith, and I
With thee alone will live and die.

BELPHEGOR.

A fable.

FROM MACHIAVEL.

——— Fugit indignata sub umbras.

VIRG.

THE' infernal monarch once, as stories tell,
Review'd his subjects from all parts of hell;
Around his throne unnumber'd millions wait,
He scarce believed his empire was so great;
Still as each pass'd, he ask'd with friendly care,
What crime had caused their fall, and brought
them there:

Scarce one he question'd but replied the same,
And on the marriage noose laid all the blame;
Thence every fatal error of their lives
They all deduce, and all accuse their wives.

Then to his peers, and potentates around,
Thus Satan spoke; hell trembled with the sound—

‘ My friends, what vast advantages would flow
To these our realms, could we but fully know
The form and nature of these marriage chains,
That send such crowds to our infernal plains!
Let some bold patriot then, who dares to show
His generous love to this our state below,
For his dear country’s good the task essay,
And animate a while some human clay;
Ten years in marriage bonds he shall remain,
Enjoy its pleasures, and endure its pain;
Then, to his friends return’d, with truth relate
The nature of the matrimonial state.’

He spoke; the listening crowds his scheme
approved:

But who so much his prince or country loved
As thus, with fearless heart, to undertake
This hymeneal trial for their sake?

At length with one consent they all propose,
That fortune shall by lot the task impose;
The dreaded chance on bold Belphegor fell,
Sighing he obey’d, and took his leave of hell.

First in fair Florence he was pleased to fix,
Bought a large house, fine plate, a coach and six;
Dress’d rich and gay, play’d high, drank hard,
and whored,

And lived in short in all things like a lord:
His feasts were plenteous, and his wines were
strong,

So poets, priests, and pimps his table throng,
Bring dedications, sermons, whores, and plays,
The devil was ne’er so flatter’d in his days:
The ladies too were kind, each tender dame
Sigh’d when she mention’d Roderigo’s name;

For so he's call'd : rich, young, and debonair,
He reigns sole monarch of the longing fair ;
No daughter, sure, of Eve could e'er escape
The devil, when clothed in such a tempting shape.

One nymph at length, superior to the rest,
Gay, beautiful, and young, inspired his breast ;
Soft looks and sighs his passion soon betray'd,
A while he woos, then weds the lovely maid.
I shall not now, to grace my tale, relate
What feasts, what balls, what dresses, pomp, and
state

Adorn'd their nuptial day, lest it should seem
As tedious to the reader as to him,
Who, big with expectation of delight,
Impatient waited for the happy night.
The happy night is come, his longing arms
Press close the yielding maid in all her charms,
The yielding maid, who, now no longer coy,
With equal ardour loves, and gives a loose to joy :
Dissolved in bliss more exquisite than all
He e'er had felt in heaven, before his fall,
With rapture clinging to his lovely bride,
In murmurs to himself Belphegor cried, [fears?
' Are these the marriage chains? are these my
Oh, had my ten but been ten thousand years!'

But ah, these happy moments last not long !
For in one month his wife has found her tongue,
All thoughts of love and tenderness are lost,
Their only aim is, who shall squander most ;
She dreams of nothing now but being fine,
Whilst he is ever guzzling nasty wine ;
She longs for jewels, equipage, and plate,
And he, sad man ! stays out so *very* late !

Hence every day domestic wars are bred,
A truce is hardly kept while they're abed;
They wrangle all day long, and then at night,
Like wooing cats, at once they love and fight.

His riches too are with his quiet flown,
And they once spent, all friends in course are
gone;

The sum design'd his whole ten years to last,
Is all consumed before the first is pass'd:
Where shall he hide? ah, whither must he fly?
Legions of duns abroad in ambush lie;
For fear of them, no more he dares to roam,
And the worst dun of all, his wife's at home.

Quite tired at length with such a wretched life,
He flies one night at once from debts and wife;
But ere the morning dawn his flight is known;
And crowds pursue him close from town to town:
He quits the public road, and wandering strays
Through unfrequented woods and pathless ways;
At last with joy a little farm he sees,
Where lived a good old man in health and ease;
Matthew his name: to him Belphegor goes,
And begs protection from pursuing foes,
With tears relates his melancholy case,
Tells him from whence he came, and who he was,
And vows to pay for his reception well,
When next he should receive his rents from hell:
The farmer hears his tale with pitying ear,
And bids him live in peace and safety there;
A while he did; no duns, no noise, or strife
Disturb'd him there;—for Matt had ne'er a wife.
But ere few weeks in this retreat are pass'd,
Matt, too, himself becomes a dun at last;

Demands his promised pay with heat and rage,
Till thus Belphegor's words his wrath assuage—
' My friend, we devils, like English peers (he
cried),

Though free from law, are yet by honour tied ;
Though tradesmen's cheating bills I scorn to view,
I pay all debts that are by honour due ;
And therefore have contrived long since a way,
Beyond all hopes thy kindness to repay ;
We subtle spirits can, you know, with ease
Possess whatever human breasts we please,
With sudden frenzy can o'ercast the mind,
Let passions loose, and captive reason bind :
Thus I three mortal bosoms will infest,
And force them to apply to you for rest ;
Vast sums for cure they willingly shall pay,
Thrice, and but thrice, your power I will obey.'

He spoke, then fled unseen, like rushing wind,
And breathless left his mortal frame behind :
The corpse is quickly known, and news is spread
That Roderigo's in the desert dead ;
His wife in fashionable grief appears,
Sighs for one day, then mourns two tedious years.

A beauteous maid, who then in Florence dwelt,
In a short time unusual symptoms felt ;
Physicians came, prescribed, then took their fees,
But none could find the cause of her disease ;
Her parents thought 'twas love disturb'd her rest,
But all the learn'd agreed, she was possess'd ;
In vain the doctors all their art applied,
In vain the priests their holy trumpery tried ;
No prayers nor medicines could the demon tame,
Till Matthew heard the news, and hastening
came :

He asks five hundred pounds; the money's paid :
He forms the magic spell, then cures the maid :
Hence chased, the devil to two rich houses flies,
And makes their heirs successively his prize,
Who both, by Matthew's skill relieved from
pains,

Reward his wondrous art with wondrous gains.

And now Belphegor, having thrice obey'd,
With reason thinks his host is fully paid ;
Next free to range, to Gallia's king he flies,
As devils ambitious ever love to rise ;
Black hideous scenes distract his royal mind,
From all he seeks relief, but none can find,
And vows vast treasures shall his art repay,
Whoe'er can chase the strange disease away :
At length, instructed by the voice of fame,
To Matthew sends ; poor Matt reluctant came ;
He knew his power expired, refused to try,
But all excuses fail'd, he must, or die ;
At last, despairing, he the task essay'd,
Approach'd the monarch's ear, and whispering,
said—

[here,

‘ Since force, not choice, has brought thy servant
Once more, Belphegor, my petition hear,
This once, at my request, thy post resign,
And save my life, as once I rescued thine.’

Cruel Belphegor, deaf to his request,
Disdain'd his prayers, and made his woes a jest :
With tears and sighs he begg'd, and begg'd again,
Still the ungrateful fiend but mock'd his pain ;
Then turning round he told the' expecting court,
This devil was of a most malignant sort ;
And that he could but make one trial more,
And if that fail'd, he then must give him o'er :

Then placing numerous drums and trumpets
round,

Instructed when he moved his hand to sound,
He whisper'd in his patient's ear again,
Belphegor answer'd, 'all his arts were vain :'
He gives the sign, they sound; the' outrageous
din

Startles the king, and frights the devil within ;
He asks what 'tis, and ' vows that in his life
He ne'er had heard the like—except his wife ;'
' By heavens, 'tis she (Matt cries), you'd best be
gone,

She comes once more to seize you for her own.'—
Belphegor, frightened, not one word replies,
But to the' infernal shades for refuge flies ;
There paints a dreadful sketch of married lives,
And feelingly confirms the charge on wives :
Matthew, o'erpaid with honours, fame, and fees,
Returns to bless'd obscurity and ease,
With joy triumphant Io Pæan sings,
And vows to deal no more with devils or kings.

A SIMILE.

CORINNA, in the country bred,
Harbour'd strange notions in her head,
Notions in town quite out of fashion ;
Such as, that love's a dangerous passion,
That virtue is the maiden's jewel,
And, to be safe, she must be cruel.

Thus arm'd she' had long secured her honour
From all assaults yet made upon her,

Had scratch'd the' impetuous captain's hand,
Had torn the lawyer's gown and band,
And gold refused from knights and squires
To bribe her to her own desires :
For, to say truth, she thought it hard
To be of pleasures thus debarr'd,
She saw by others freely tasted.
She pouted, pined, grew pale, and wasted :
Yet, notwithstanding her condition,
Continued firm in opposition.

At length a troop of horse came down,
And quarter'd in a neighbouring town ;
The cornet he was tall and young,
And had a most bewitching tongue.
They saw and liked : the siege begun :
Each hour he some advantage won.
He ogled first ;—she turn'd away ;—
But met his eyes the following day :
Then her reluctant hand he seizes,
That soon she gives him, when he pleases :
Her ruby lips he next attacks :—
She struggles ;—in a while she smacks :
Her snowy breast he then invades ;—
That yields too after some parades ;
And of that fortress once possess'd,
He quickly masters all the rest.
No longer now, a dupe to fame,
She smothers or resists her flame,
But loves without or fear or shame.

So have I seen the Tory race
Long in the pouts for want of place,
Never in humour, never well,
Wishing for what they dared not tell,

Their heads with country notions fraught,
Notions in town not worth a groat,
These tenets all reluctant quit,
And step by step at last submit
To reason, eloquence, and Pitt.

At first to Hanover a plum
Was sent;—they said—a trivial sum,
But if he went one tittle further,
They vow'd and swore they'd cry out murder;
Ere long a larger sum is wanted;
They pish'd and frown'd—but still they granted:
He push'd for more, and more again—
Well—money's better sent than men:
Here virtue made another stand.—
No—not a man shall leave the land.
What?—not one regiment to Embden?
They start—but now they're fairly hemm'd in:
These soon, and many more are sent;—
They're silent—Silence gives consent.
Our troops, they now can plainly see,
May Britain guard in Germany:
Hanoverians, Hessians, Prussians
Are paid, to' oppose the French and Russians:
Nor scruple they with truth to say,
They're fighting for America:
No more they make a fiddle-faddle
About a Hessian horse or saddle;
No more of continental measures,
No more of wasting British treasures;
Ten millions and a vote of credit.—
'Tis right—He can't be wrong who did it:
They're fairly soused o'er head and ears,
And cured of all their rustic fears.

THE AMERICAN COACHMAN.

CROWN'D be the man with lasting praise,
 Who first contrived the pin
 From vicious steeds to loose a chaise,
 And save the necks within.

See how they prance, and bound, and skip,
 And all control disdain;
 Defy the terrors of the whip,
 And rend the silken rein;

A while we try if art or strength
 Are able to prevail;
 But hopeless, when we find at length
 That all our efforts fail:

With ready foot the spring we press,
 Out flies the magic plug,
 Then, disengaged from all distress,
 We sit quite safe and snug.

The pamper'd steeds, their freedom gain'd,
 Run off full speed together;
 But having no plan ascertain'd,
 They run they know not whither.

Boys, who love mischief and a course,
 Enjoying this disaster,
 Bawl, 'Stop them! Stop them!' till they're
 hoarse;
 But mean to drive them faster.

Each claiming now his native right,
Scorns to obey his brother ;
So they proceed to kick and bite,
And worry one another.

Hungry at last, and blind, and lame,
Bleeding at nose and eyes ;
By sufferings growing mighty tame,
And by experience wise ;

With bellies full of liberty,
But void of oats and hay ;
They both sneak back, their folly see,
And run no more away.

Let all who view the' instructive scene,
And patronise the plan,
Give thanks to Gloucester's honest Dean,
For, Tucker¹,—thou'rt the man.

¹ Early in the unfortunate contest between the mother country and her American colonies, the Rev. Dr. Tucker, Dean of Gloucester, published a pamphlet, entitled, *An Address and Appeal to the Landed Interest*; in which he proposed and recommended to the nation a total separation from the colonies, the rejection of them from being fellow members and joint partakers in the privileges and advantages of the British Empire, because they refuse to submit to the authority and jurisdiction of the British Legislature ; offering at the same time to enter into alliance of friendship and treaties of commerce with them, as with any other sovereign independent states.—This pamphlet was the foundation of the preceding short poem, written about a year after it, in which the author, with that conciseness as to the matter, and humour in the manner, so peculiar to himself, recommends and supports the Dean's plan.

TO

THE EARL OF CARLISLE.

MY LORD,

I BEG leave to present to your lordship the following Ode; for at whose shrine can it be offered with more propriety than at your lordship's, whose taste for poetry, as well as for every other part of polite literature, is so justly and so universally acknowledged? Your lordship has yourself made no inconsiderable figure in the lyric; but I will not so much flatter you, even in a Dedication, as to affirm that you have perfectly succeeded. I allow, that the very few pieces with which you have favoured the public are as elegant and beautiful as any in our language: I own, that in every one of them there are just conception, lively imagination, correct expression, and clear connexion: but I know your lordship's goodness will pardon me, when I presume to assert, that all these excellences are utterly repugnant to the noble frenzy and sublime obscurity of the Ode; both which are sufficiently visible in this, which I have here the honour to lay before your lordship, and which I take to be a model of perfection. My obligations, perhaps, may make me partial to its merits, as to the publication of it I am indebted for this opportunity of assuring your lordship that I am,

MY LORD,

Your lordship's most devoted, and
obedient humble servant,

THE EDITOR.

PREFACE.

THE following Ode was found in the cabinet of a late celebrated writer; and is esteemed, by the best judges, to be the most perfect composition of the kind that is any where to be met with amongst the productions of the numerous lyric poets of modern times.

That learned and judicious critic, Dr. Joseph Trap, in his *Prælectiones Poeticæ*, thus describes the most excellent composers of lyric poems or odes. ‘Conceptus omnium ardentissimi; a vulgaribus cogitatis remotissimi; methodum fugere videntur; transitiones affectant, quæ nulla arte fieri videntur, nihilo licet plus artis insit. Sententiarum nexus et copulas negligere amant; modo abrupto et improvise poemata incipiunt, et finiunt; et furore quodam usitatis legibus et regulis superiore, ab hoc ad illud devolant, nulla loquendi formulis venia vel obtenta prius, aut petita.’ Which, for the benefit of ladies and gentlemen, I thus translate: ‘Their conceptions are the most daring and most remote from all vulgar ideas, or common sense; they seem to fly from all method; they affect transitions, which appear to be void of all art, though in them there is a great deal; they are fond of neglecting all connexions; they begin and end their poem in a manner abrupt, sudden, and unexpected; and, with a madness superior to all the laws and rules of writing, dash about from one thing to another,

without obtaining pardon, or even condescending to ask it.' These rules have been observed with great diligence, and some success, by most of the writers of modern odes; but have never been adhered to with that happy exactness, as in the piece which is now before us. It begins in a manner the most abrupt and unexpected, and ends as abruptly as it begins. It opens with a most sublime speech of a giant, supposed to have run mad from some disappointment in ambition or love; and this, in conformity to the strictest laws of criticism, and the example of our most admired writers of odes, is so artificially contrived that the reader, however sagacious he may be, cannot possibly discover, before he arrives at the end of the second stanza, whether it is the speech of the giant or the poet, or any speech at all.

The transition from the giant's speech to that beautiful description of the morning, is truly Pindaric; the sudden apostrophe to the sun is perfectly sublime; and that to the moon no less tender and pathetic: the descriptions of the four Seasons are wonderfully picturesque, and are not, as usual, copies drawn from the scenery of Italian groves, and the plains of Arcadia, but true originals, taken on the spot in old England, and formed of ideas entirely new. And the address to Liberty, which concludes this admirable ode, is far superior to any thing of that kind with which we are so frequently entertained by our most admired poets; as it is more expressive of the true sense and spirit of an Englishman.

Just and lively pictures are the very essence of an ode, as well as of an auction-room, whether there are any proper places to hang them in or not; and such there are in the narrow compass of this little piece, of every thing that is great and beautiful in nature; of the morning rising from the ocean; of the sun, the moon, and the planetary system; of a giant and a hermit; of woods, rocks, and mountains, and the seasons of the revolving year; and in all these the images are so entirely new, the transitions so sudden and unexpected, so void of all apparent art, yet not without much of that which is quite invisible; the thoughts are so sublime, so distant from all vulgar ideas, or common sense, that the judicious reader will scarcely find in it a single deviation from the severest laws of just criticism; and if he can peruse this incomparable work without an enthusiastic admiration, he ought to conclude, that whatever delight he may receive from poetry of other kinds, he is one of those unfortunate geniuses who have no taste for that most sublime species of it, the ode.

AN ODE.

Pindarum quisquis studet æmulari.

‘ I’LL combat Nature, interrupt her course,
 And baffle all her stated laws by force;
 Tear from its bed the deeply rooted pine,
 And hurl it up the craggy mountain’s side;
 Divert the tempest from its destined line,
 And stem the torrent of the’ impetuous tide;
 Teach the dull ox to dance, the ass to play,
 And even obstinate Americans to’ obey.

‘ Like some dread herald, tigers I’ll compel
 In the same field with stags in peace to dwell:
 The rampant lion now erect shall stand,
 Now conchant at my feet shall lie depress’d;
 And, if he dares but question my command,
 With one strong blow I’ll halve him to a crest.’
 Thus spoke the giant Gogmagog: the sound
 Reverberates from all the echoing rocks around.

Now Morning, robed in saffron-colour’d gown,
 Her head with pink and pea-green ribands
 dress’d,
 Climbs the celestial staircase, and looks down
 From out the gilt balcony of the East;
 From whence around she sees
 The crystal lakes and tufted trees,
 The lawns all powder’d o’er with straggling flocks,
 The scarce-enlighten’d vales, and high o’ershadowing rocks.

Enamour'd with her newly dawning charms,
Old Ocean views her with desiring eyes,
And longs once more to clasp her in his arms,
Repenting he had suffer'd her to rise
Forth from his tumbled bed,
From whence she just had fled;
To the slow, loitering hours, he roars amain,
To hasten back the lovely fugitive again.

Parent of life! refulgent lamp of day!
Without whose genial animating ray
Men, beasts, the teeming earth, and rolling seas,
Courts, camps, and mighty cities, in a trice
Must share one common fate, intensely freeze,
And all become one solid mass of ice;
Ambition would be froze, and Faction numb,
Speeches congeal'd, and orators be dumb,

Say, what new worlds and systems you survey!
In circling round your planetary way;
What beings Saturn's orb inhabit tell,
Where cold in everlasting triumph reigns;
Or what their frames who unconsumed can dwell
In Mercury's red-hot and molten plains;
Say! for most ardently I wish to know,
What bodies can endure eternal fire or snow!

And thou, sweet Moon! canst tell a softer tale;
To thee the maid, thy likeness fair and pale,
In pensive contemplation oft applies,
When parted from her loved and loving swain,
And looks on you with tear-besprinkled eyes,
And sighs and looks, and looks and sighs again;
Say, for thou know'st what constant hearts endure;
And by thy frequent changes teach the cure.

Thy gentle beams the lonely hermit sees,
Gleam through the waving branches of the trees,
Which, high-embowering, shade his gloomy cell,
Where undisturb'd perpetual silence reigns,
Unless the owl is heard, or distant bell,
Or the wind whistling o'er the furzy plains.
How bless'd to dwell in this sequester'd spot:
Forgetting parliaments; by them forgot!

Now lovely Spring her velvet mantle spreads,
And paints with green and gold the flowery meads;
Fruit trees in vast white periwigs are seen,
Resembling much some antiquated beau,
Which north-east winds, that blow so long and
keen,
Powder full oft with gentle flakes of snow;
Soft nightingales their tuneful vigils hold,
And sweetly sing and shake—and shake with cold.

Summer succeeds; in evenings soft and warm,
Thrice-happy lovers saunter arm in arm;
The gay and fair now quit the dusty town,
O'er turnpike-roads incessant chaises sweep,
And, whirling, bear their lovely ladings down,
To brace their nerves beneath the briny deep;
There with success each swain his nymph assails,
As birds, they say, are caught--can we but salt
their tails.

Then Autumn, more serene, if not so bright,
Regales at once our palate and our sight;
With joy the ruddy orchards we behold,
And of its purple clusters rob the vine;
The spacious fields are cover'd o'er with gold,
Which the glad farmer counts as ready coin:

But disappointment oft his hopes attends—
In tithes and mildews the rich prospect ends.

Last, Winter comes; decrepit, old, and dull;
Yet has his comforts too—his barns are full;
The social converse, circulating glass,

And cheerful fire are his: to him belong
The' enlivening dance that warms the chilly lass,

The serious game at whist, and merry song;
Nor wants he beauties—see the sunbeams glow
O'er lakes of crystal ice and plains of silver snow!

Thus roll the seasons o'er Britannia's land,
But none her freeborn weather can command;
'Seasons unlike to those in servile climes,

Which o'er Hispania's or Italia's plains
Dispense, at regular and stated times,
Successive heat and cold, and drought and rains;
Hers scorning, like her sons, to be control'd,
Breathe heat in winter oft, and oft in summer cold.

Hail, Liberty, fair goddess of this isle!
Deign on my verses, and on me, to smile;
Like them unfetter'd by the bonds of sense,

Permit us to enjoy life's transient dream,
To live, and write, without the least pretence
To method, order, meaning, plan, or scheme:
And shield us safe beneath thy guardian wings,
From law, religion, ministers, and kings.

TO

A LADY IN TOWN,

SOON AFTER HER LEAVING THE COUNTRY.

WHILST you, dear maid, o'er thousands born to
 reign,
 For the gay town exchange the rural plain,
 The cooling breeze and evening walk forsake
 For stifling crowds, which your own beauties make;
 Through circling joys while you incessant stray,
 Charm in the Mall, and sparkle at the play;
 Think (if successive vanities can spare
 One thought to love) what cruel pangs I bear,
 Left in these plains all wretched and alone,
 To weep with fountains and with echoes groan,
 And mourn incessantly that fatal day
 That all my bliss with Chloe snatch'd away.
 Say by what arts I can relieve my pain,
 Verse, music, all I try, but try in vain;
 In vain the breathing flute my hand employs,
 Late the companion of my Chloe's voice,
 Nor Handel's nor Corelli's tuneful airs
 Can harmonize my soul, or sooth my cares;
 Those once loved medicines unsuccessful prove,
 Music, alas, is but the voice of love!
 In vain I oft harmonious lines peruse,
 And seek for aid from Pope's and Prior's Muse;
 Their treacherous numbers but assist the foe,
 And call forth scenes of sympathizing woe:
 Here Heloise mourns her absent lover's charms,
 There parting Emma sighs in Henry's arms;

Their loves, like mine, ill fated I bemoan,
And in their tender sorrows read my own.

Restless sometimes, as oft the mournful dove
Forsakes her nest, forsaken by her love,
I fly from home, and seek the sacred fields
Where Cam's old run its silver current yields,
Where solemn towers o'erlook each mossy grove,
As if to guard it from the' assaults of love;
Yet guard in vain, for there my Chloe's eyes
But lately made whole colleges her prize;
Her sons, though few, not Pallas could defend,
Nor Dulness succour to her thousands lend;
Love like a fever with infectious rage
Scorch'd up the young, and thaw'd the frost of age;
To gaze at her, e'en Dons were seen to run,
And leave unfinish'd pipes, and authors—scarce
begun.

So Helen look'd, and moved with such a grace¹,
When the grave seniors of the Trojan race
Were forced those fatal beauties to admire,
That all their youth consumed, and set their town
on fire.

At famed Newmarket oft I spend the day,
An unconcern'd spectator of the play;
There pitiless observe the ruin'd heir
With anger fired, or melting with despair;
For how should I his trivial loss bemoan,
Who feel one so much greater of my own?
There while the golden heaps, a glorious prize,
Wait the decision of two rival dice,
Whilst long disputes 'twixt *seven* and *five* remain,
And each, like parties, have their friends for gain,

¹ Vid. Hom. Il. lib. iii. ver. 150.

Without one wish I see the guineas shine,
'Fate, keep your gold (I cry), make Chloe mine.'

Now see, prepared their utmost speed to try,
O'er the smooth turf the bounding racers fly!
Now more and more their slender limbs they strain,
And foaming stretch along the velvet plain!
Ah, stay! swift steeds, your rapid flight delay,
No more the jockey's smarting lash obey:
But rather let my hand direct the rein,
And guide your steps a nobler prize to gain;
Then swift as eagles cut the yielding air,
Bear me, oh, bear me, to the absent fair.

Now when the winds are hush'd, the air serene,
And cheerful sunbeams gild the beauteous scene,
Pensive o'er all the neighbouring fields I stray,
Where'er or choice or chance directs the way:
Or view the opening lawns, or private woods,
Or distant bluish hills, or silver floods:
Now harmless birds in silken nets insnare,
Now with swift dogs pursue the flying hare:
Dull sports! for oh, my Chloe is not there!

Fatigued, at length I willingly retire
To a small study and a cheerful fire;
There o'er some folio pore, I pore, 'tis true,
But oh, my thoughts are fled, and fled to you!
I hear you, see you, feast upon your eyes,
And clasp with eager arms the lovely prize;
Here for a while I could forget my pain,
Whilst I by dear reflection live again:
But e'en these joys are too sublime to last,
And quickly fade, like all the real ones past;
For just when now beneath some silent grove
I hear you talk—and talk perhaps of love—

Or charm with thrilling notes the listening ear,
Sweeter than angels sing, or angels hear,
My treacherous hand its weighty charge lets go,
The book falls thundering on the floor below,
The pleasing vision in a moment's gone,
And I once more am wretched and alone.

So when glad Orpheus from the' infernal shade
Had just recall'd his long lamented maid,
Soon as her charms had reach'd his eager eyes,
Lost in eternal night, again she dies.

TO A LADY,

SENT WITH A PRESENT OF SHELLS AND STONES,
DESIGNED FOR A GROTTTO.

WITH gifts like these, the spoils of neighbouring
The Indian swain his sable love adores; [shores,
Offerings well suited to the dusky shrine
Of his rude goddess, but unworthy mine:
And yet they seem not such a worthless prize,
If nicely view'd by philosophic eyes;
And such are yours, that Nature's works admire
With warmth like that which they themselves
inspire.

To such how fair appears each grain of sand
Or humblest weed, as wrought by Nature's hand!
How far superior to all human power
Springs the green blade, or buds the painted flower!
In all her births, though of the meanest kinds,
A just observer entertainment finds,
With fond delight her low production sees,
And how she gently rises by degrees;

A shell or stone he can with pleasure view, [you.
Hence trace her noblest works, the heavens—and

Behold, how bright these gaudy trifles shine,
The lovely sportings of a hand divine!
See with what art each curious shell is made,
Here carved in fretwork, there with pearl inlaid!
What vivid streaks the' enamel'd stones adorn,
Fair as the paintings of the purple morn!
Yet still not half their charms can reach our eyes,
While thus confused the sparkling chaos lies;
Doubly they'll please when, in your grotto placed,
They plainly speak their fair disposer's taste;
Then glories yet unseen shall o'er them rise,
New order from your hand, new lustre from your
eyes,

How sweet, how charming will appear this grot,
When by your art to full perfection brought!
Here verdant plants and blooming flowers will
grow, [flow;
There bubbling currents through the shell-work
Here coral mix'd with shells of various dyes,
There polish'd stones will charm our wondering
Delightful bower of bliss! secure retreat! [eyes:
Fit for the Muses, and Statira's seat.

But still how good must be that fair one's mind,
Who thus in solitude can pleasure find!
The Muse her company, good sense her guide,
Resistless charms her power, but not her pride:
Who thus forsakes the town, the park, and play,
In silent shades to pass her hours away;
Who better likes to breathe fresh country air
Than ride imprison'd in a velvet chair;
And makes the warbling nightingale her choice,
Before the thrills of Farinelli's voice;

At every touch more animated grows,
And with new life and new ideas glows,
Fresh beauties from the kind defiler gains,
And shines each moment brighter from its stains.

Let mighty Love no longer boast his darts,
That strike unerring, aim'd at mortal hearts ;
Chloe, your quill can equal wonders do,
Wound full as sure, and at a distance too :
Arm'd with your feather'd weapons in your hands,
From pole to pole you send your great commands ;
To distant climes in vain the lover flies,
Your pen o'ertakes him, if he scapes your eyes ;
So those who from the sword in battle run,
But perish victims to the distant gun.

Beauty's a shortlived blaze, a fading flower,
But these are charms no ages can devour ;
These, far superior to the brightest face,
Triumph alike o'er time as well as space.
When that fair form, which thousands now adore,
By years decay'd, shall tyrannize no more,
These lovely lines shall future ages view,
And eyes unborn, like ours, be charm'd by you.

How oft do I admire with fond delight
The curious piece, and wish like you to write !
Alas, vain hope ! that might as well aspire
To copy Paulo's stroke or Titian's fire :
E'en now your splendid lines before me lie,
And I in vain to imitate them try ;
Believe me, fair, I'm practising this art,
To steal your hand, in hopes to steal your heart.

WRITTEN IN A

LADY'S VOLUME OF TRAGEDIES.

SINCE thou, relentless maid, canst daily hear
Thy slave's complaints without one sigh or tear,
Why beats thy breast, or thy bright eyes o'erflow
At these imaginary scenes of woe?
Rather teach these to weep and that to heave
At real pains themselves to thousands give;
And if such pity to feign'd love is due,
Consider how much more you owe to true.

GIVEN TO A LADY,

WITH A WATCH WHICH SHE BORROWED TO HANG AT
HER BED'S HEAD.

WHILST half asleep my Chloe lies,
And all her softest thoughts arise;
Whilst, tyrant Honour laid at rest,
Love steals to her unguarded breast;
Then whisper to the yielding fair,
Thou witness to the pains I bear,
How oft her slave, with open eyes,
All the long night despairing lies;
Impatient till the rosy day
Shall once again its beams display,
And with it he again may rise,
To greet with joy her dawning eyes.

Tell her as all thy motions stand,
Unless recruited by her hand,
So shall my life forget to move ;
Unless, each day, the fair I love
Shall new repeated vigour give
With smiles, and make me fit to live.
Tell her, when far from her I stray,
How oft I chide thy slow delay ;
But when beneath her smiles I live,
Bless'd with all joys the gods can give,
How often I reprove thy haste,
And think each precious moment flies too fast.

TO A

NOSEGAY IN PANCHARILLA'S BREAST.

IMITATED FROM BONFONIUS¹, PAS. XI.

1729.

MUST you alone then, happy flowers,
Ye shortlived sons of vernal showers,
Must you alone be still thus bless'd,
And dwell in Pancharilla's breast?
Oh, would the gods but hear my prayer,
To change my form and place me there!
I should not sure so quickly die,
I should not so unactive lie :
But ever wandering to and fro
From this to that fair ball of snow,

¹ A poet of the sixteenth century, born at Clermont, in Auvergne, Lieutenant General of Bar on the Seine ; who, of all the moderns, in his Latin poems approaches the nearest to the grace, ease, and softness of Tibullus.

Enjoy ten thousand thousand blisses,
And print on each ten thousand kisses.

Nor would I thus the task give o'er;
Curious new secrets to explore,
I'd never rest till I had found
Which globe was softest, which most round—
Which was most yielding, smooth, and white,
Or the left bosom, or the right;
Which was the warmest, easiest bed,
And which was tipp'd with purest red.

Nor could I leave the beauteous scene
Till I had traced the path between,
That milky way so smooth and even,
That promises to lead to heaven:
Lower and lower I'd descend,
To find where it at last would end;
Till fully bless'd I'd wandering rove
O'er all the fragrant Cyprian grove.

But ah! those wishes all are vain,
The fair one triumphs in my pain;
To flowers that know not to be bless'd
The nymphs unveils her snowy breast,
While to her slave's desiring eyes
The heavenly prospect she denies:
Too cruel fate, too cruel fair,
To place a senseless Nosegay there,
And yet refuse my lips the bliss
To taste one dear transporting kiss.

ON A NOSEGAY

IN THE COUNTESS OF COVENTRY'S BREAST¹.In Imitation of *Wallar*.

DELIGHTFUL scene! in which appear
 At once all beauties of the year!
 See how the zephyrs of her breath
 Fan gently all the flowers beneath!
 See the gay flowers how bright they glow,
 Though planted in a bed of snow!
 Yet see how soon they fade and die,
 Scorch'd by the sunshine of her eye!
 Nor wonder if, o'ercome with bliss,
 They droop their heads to steal a kiss;
 Who would not die on that dear breast?
 Who would not die to be so bless'd?

 THE CHOICE.

HAD I, Pygmalionlike, the power
 To make the nymph I would adore;
 The model should be thus design'd,
 Like this her form, like this her mind.

Her skin should be as lilies fair,
 With rosy cheeks and jetty hair;

¹ Maria, Countess of Coventry, the eldest daughter of John Gunning, Esq. by his wife Bridget, daughter of John Bourke, Lord Viscount Mayo, in Ireland. She was married to George William, the sixth Earl of Coventry, March 5, 1752, and departed this life, October 1, 1760. Her transcendent beauty was the admiration of all who beheld her.

Her lips with pure vermilion spread,
And soft and moist, as well as red ;
Her eyes should shine with vivid light,
At once both languishing and bright ;
Her shape should be exact and small,
Her stature rather low than tall ;
Her limbs well turn'd, her air and mien
At once both sprightly and serene ;
Besides all this, a nameless grace
Should be diffused all o'er her face ;
To make the lovely piece complete,
Not only beautiful but sweet.

This for her form : now for her mind ;
I'd have it open, generous, kind,
Void of all coquettish arts,
And vain designs of conquering hearts,
Not sway'd by any views of gain,
Nor fond of giving others pain ;
But soft, though bright, like her own eyes,
Discreetly witty, gaily wise.

I'd have her skill'd in every art
That can engage a wandering heart ;
Know all the sciences of love,
Yet ever willing to improve ;
To press the hand, and roll the eye,
And drop sometimes an amorous sigh ;
To lengthen out the balmy kiss,
And heighten every tender bliss ;
And yet I'd have the charmer be
By nature only taught,—or me.

I'd have her to strict honour tied,
And yet without one spark of pride :
In company well dress'd and fine,
Yet not ambitious to outshine ;

In private always neat and clean,
And quite a stranger to the spleen ;
Well pleased to grace the park and play,
And dance sometimes the night away,
But oftener fond to spend her hours
In solitude and shady bowers,
And there, beneath some silent grove,
Delight in poetry and love.

Some sparks of the poetic fire
I fain would have her soul inspire,
Enough, at least, to let her know
What joys from love and virtue flow ;
Enough, at least, to make her wise,
And fops and fopperies despise ;
Prefer her books and her own muse
To visits, scandal, chat, and news ;
Above her sex exalt her mind,
And make her more than womankind.

TO A YOUNG LADY,

GOING TO THE WEST INDIES.

FOR universal sway design'd,
To distant realms Clorinda flies,
And scorns, in one small isle confined,
To bound the conquests of her eyes.

From our cold climes to India's shore
With cruel haste she wings her way,
To scorch their sultry plains still more,
And rob us of our only day.

Whilst every streaming eye o'erflows
With tender floods of parting tears,
Thy breast, dear cause of all our woes,
Alone unmoved and gay appears.

But still, if right the Muses tell,
The fated point of time is nigh,
When grief shall that fair bosom swell,
And trickle from thy lovely eye.

Though now, like Philip's son, whose arms
Did once the vassal world command,
You rove with unresisted charms,
And conquer both by sea and land;

Yet when (as soon they must) mankind
Shall all be doom'd to wear your chain,
You too, like him, will weep to find
No more unconquer'd worlds remain.

ON

LUCINDA'S RECOVERY

FROM THE SMALL POX.

BRIGHT Venus long with envious eyes
The fair Lucinda's charms had seen,
' And shall she still (the goddess cries)
Thus dare to rival Beauty's queen?

She spoke, and to the' infernal plains
With cruel haste indignant goes,
Where Death, the prince of terrors, reigns,
Amidst diseases, pains, and woes.

To him her prayers she thus applies—

‘ O sole, in whom my hopes confide
To blast my rival's potent eyes,
And in her fate all mortal pride !

‘ Let her but feel thy chilling dart,
I will forgive, tremendous god !
E'en that which pierced Adonis' heart :’—
He hears, and gives the' assenting nod.

Then calling forth a fierce disease,
Impatient for the beauteous prey,
Bids him the loveliest fabric seize
The gods e'er form'd of human clay.

Assured he meant Lucinda's charms,
To her the' infectious demon flies ;
Her neck, her cheeks, her lips disarms,
And of their lightning robs her eyes.

The Cyprian queen with cruel joy
Beholds her rival's charms o'erthrown,
Nor doubts, like mortal fair, to' employ
Their ruins to augment her own.

From out the spoils of every grace
The goddess picks some glorious prize,
Transplants the roses from her face,
And arms young Cupids from her eyes.

Now Death (ah, veil the mournful scene !)
Had in one moment pierced her heart,
Had kinder Fate not stepp'd between,
And turn'd aside the' uplifted dart.

‘ What frenzy bids thy hand essay,
(He cries) to wound thy surest friend,
Whose beauties to thy realms each day
Such numerous crowds of victims send ?

' Are not her eyes, where'er they aim,
As thine own silent arrows sure?
Or who, that once has felt their flame,
Dared e'er indulge one hope of cure?
Death, thus reproved, his hand restrains,
And bids the dire distemper fly :
The cruel beauty lives and reigns,
That thousands may adore, and die.

THE SNOWBALL.

FROM PETRONIUS AFRANIUS.

WHITE as her hand fair Julia threw
A ball of silver snow ;
The frozen globe fired as it flew,
My bosom felt it glow.
Strange power of love! whose great command
Can thus a snowball arm;
When sent, fair Julia, from thine hand,
E'en ice itself can warm.
How should we then secure our hearts?
Love's power we all must feel,
Who thus can, by strange magic arts,
In ice his flames conceal.
'Tis thou alone, fair Julia, know,
Canst quench my fierce desire,
But not with water, ice, or snow,
But with an equal fire.

THE TEMPLE OF VENUS.

IN her own isle's remotest grove
 Stands Venus' lovely shrine,
 Sacred to beauty, joy, and love,
 And built by hands divine.

The polish'd structure, fair and bright
 As her own ivory skin,
 Without is alabaster white,
 And ruby all within.

Above a cupola charms the view,
 White as unsullied snow;
 Two columns of the same fair hue
 Support the dome below.

Its walls a trickling fountain laves,
 In which such virtue reigns
 That, bathed in its balsamic waves,
 No lover feels his pains.

Before the' unfolding gates there spreads
 A fragrant spicy grove,
 That with its curling branches shades
 The labyrinths of Love.

Bright Beauty here her captives holds,
 Who kiss their easy chains,
 And in the softest closest folds
 Her willing slaves detains.

Wouldst thou, who ne'er these seas hast tried,
 Find where this island lies,
 Let pilot Love the rudder guide,
 And steer by Chloe's eyes.

CHLOE ANGLING.

ON yon fair brook's enamel'd side

Behold my Chloe stands!

Her angle trembles o'er the tide,

As conscious of her hands.

Calm as the gentle waves appear,

Her thoughts serenely flow,

Calm as the softly breathing air

That curls the brook below.

Such charms her sparkling eyes disclose,

With such soft power endued,

She seems a newborn Venus rose

From the transparent flood.

From each green bank, and mossy cave,

The scaly race repair,

They sport beneath the crystal wave,

And kiss her image there.

Here the bright silver eel enroll'd

In shining volumes lies,

There basks the carp bedropp'd with gold

In the sunshine of her eyes.

With hungry pikes in wanton play

The timorous trouts appear;

The hungry pikes forget to prey,

The timorous trouts to fear.

With equal haste the thoughtless crew

To the fair tempter fly;

Nor grieve they, whilst her eyes they view,

That by her hand they die.

Thus I too view'd the nymph of late ;
 Ah, simple fish, beware !
Soon will you find my wretched fate,
 And struggle in the snare.
But, fair one, though these toils succeed,
 Of conquest be not vain ;
Nor think o'er all the scaly breed
 Unpunish'd thus to reign.
Remember, in a watery glass
 His charms Narcissus spied,
When for his own bewitching face
 The youth despair'd and died.
No more then harmless fish insnare,
 No more such wiles pursue ;
Lest, whilst you baits for them prepare,
 Love find out one for you.

CHLOE HUNTING.

WHILST thousands court fair Chloe's love,
 She fears the dangerous joy,
But, Cynthia-like, frequents the grove,
 As lovely and as coy.
With the same speed she seeks the hind,
 Or hunts the flying hare,
She leaves pursuing swains behind,
 To languish and despair.
Oh, strange caprice in thy dear breast,
 Whence first this whim began ;
To follow thus each worthless beast,
 And shun their sovereign man !

Consider, fair, what 'tis you do,
How thus they both must die,
Not surer they, when you pursue,
Than we, whene'er you fly.

CHLOE TO STREPHON.

A Song.

Too plain, dear youth, these tell-tale eyes
My heart your own declare;
But, for Heaven's sake, let it suffice
You reign triumphant there.

Forbear your utmost power to try,
Nor farther urge your sway;
Press not for what I must deny,
For fear I should obey.

Could all your arts successful prove,
Would you a maid undo,
Whose greatest failing is her love,
And that her love for you?

Say, would you use that very power
You from her fondness claim,
To ruin, in one fatal hour,
A life of spotless fame?

Ah! cease, my dear, to do an ill,
Because perhaps you may;
But rather try your utmost skill
To save me than betray.

Be you yourself my virtue's guard,
Defend, and not pursue;
Since 'tis a task for me too hard
To fight with love and you.

SONG.

CEASE, Sally, thy charms to expand,
All thy arts and thy witchcraft forbear;
Hide those eyes, hide that neck and that hand,
And those sweet flowing tresses of hair.

Oh! torture me not, for Love's sake,
With the smirk of those delicate lips,
With that head's dear significant shake,
And the toss of the hoop and the hips.

Oh! sight still more fatal! look there
O'er her tucker what murderers peep
So—now there's an end of my care,
I shall never more eat, drink, or sleep.

Do you sing too? ah, mischievous thought!
Touch me, touch me not there any more;
Who the devil can scape being caught
In a trap that's thus baited all o'er?

But why to advise should I try?
What nature ordains we must prove;
You no more can help charming than I
Can help being charm'd, and in love.

SONG.

WHEN first I sought fair Cælia's love,
And every charm was new,
I swore by all the gods above
To be for ever true.

But long in vain did I adore,
Long wept and sigh'd in vain,
She still protested, vow'd, and swore,
She ne'er would ease my pain.

At last o'ercome, she made me bless'd,
And yielded all her charms;
And I forsook her, when possess'd,
And fled to others' arms.

But let not this, dear Cælia, now
To rage thy breast incline;
For why, since you forgot your vow,
Should I remember mine?



CUPID RELIEVED.

As once young Cupid went astray
The little god I found;
I took his bow and shafts away,
And fast his pinions bound.

At Chloe's feet my spoils I cast,
My conquest proud to show;
She saw his godship fetter'd fast,
And smiled to see him so.

But, ah! that smile such fresh supplies
Of arms resistless gave!
I'm forced again to yield my prize,
And fall again his slave.

THE WAY TO BE WISE.

IMITATED FROM LA FONTAINE.

POOR Jenny, amorous, young, and gay,
Having by man been led astray,
To nunnery dark retired;
There lived, and look'd so like a maid,
So seldom eat, so often pray'd,
She was by all admired.

The lady Abbess oft would cry,
If any sister trod awry,
Or proved an idle slattern;
' See wise and pious Mrs. Jane,
A life so strict, so grave a mien,
Is sure a worthy pattern.'

A pert young slut at length replies,
' Experience, madam, makes folks wise,
'Tis that has made her such;
And we, poor souls, no doubt should be
As pious and as wise as she,
If we had seen as much.'

ON A LATE EXECRABLE

ATTEMPT ON HIS MAJESTY'S LIFE,

1786.

LONG had our gracious George, with gentle hand
And love paternal, Britain's sceptre sway'd;
To render this a free and happy land
Was all for which he wish'd to be obey'd.

With radiance bright, though mild, his virtues
For he of every virtue was possess'd, [shone,
Which can add lustre to a monarch's throne,
Or warm an undissembling patriot's breast.

Pattern of female excellence! his toils
His royal consort ever sooths and shares;
Imparting sweet domestic bliss, with smiles
That can disperse the heaviest cloud of cares.

Though Faction, Disappointment's restless child,
Has sometimes dared to interrupt his peace;
Yet awed at once, and charm'd, whene'er he smiled,
She bade disorder and confusion cease.

Loved and adored by all, to all a friend,
Caution seem'd needless to protect his life;
Till Hell and Madness sent abroad a fiend,
And arm'd that fiend with a destructive knife.

But Britain's Guardian Angel, who still watch'd,
To shield her favourite son from every harm,
Just in the' important moment trembling catch'd,
And turn'd aside the' assassinating arm.

Let then earth, air, and the high vaulted sky,
 With praises, prayers, and loud thanksgivings
 ring,
 Joy fire each breast and sparkle in each eye,
 That Heaven has thus preserved our country
 and our king.

EPITAPH

ON DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

HERE lies Sam Johnson :—reader, have a care,
 Tread lightly, lest you wake a sleeping bear :
 Religious, moral, generous, and humane
 He was ; but self-sufficient, proud, and vain ;
 Fond of, and overbearing in dispute,
 A Christian and a scholar—but a brute.

ANACREON, ODE XX.

A ROCK on Phrygian plains we see
 That once was beauteous Niobe :
 And Progne, too revengeful fair !
 Now flits a wandering bird in air :
 Thus I a lookingglass would be,
 That you, dear maid, might gaze on me ;
 Be changed to stays, that, straitly laced,
 I might embrace thy slender waist ;
 A silver stream, I'd bathe thee, fair,
 Or shine pomatum on thy hair ;
 In a soft sable's tippet's form
 I'd kiss thy snowy bosom warm ;

In shape of pearl that bosom deck,
And hang for ever round thy neck:
Pleased to be aught that touches you,
Your glove, your garter, or your shoe.

A PASSAGE IN OSSIAN

VERSIFIED.

THE deeds of ancient days shall be my theme;
O Lora, the soft murmurs of thy stream,
Thy trees, Garmallar, rustling in the wind,
Recall those days with pleasure to my mind.

Seest thou that rock, from whose heath-
cover'd crown,

Malvina, three old bended firs look down?
Green is the plain which at its feet is spread,
The mountain flower there shakes its milk white
head;

Two stones, memorials of departed worth,
Uplift their moss-capp'd heads, half sunk in earth;
The mountain deer, that crop the grass around,
See the pale ghosts who guard the sacred ground,
Then, starting, fly the place, and at a distance
bound.

POEMS

OF

William Wilkie, D.D.

THE
LIFE OF WILLIAM WILKIE.

BY
R. A. DAVENPORT, Esq.

ECHLIN, in the parish of Dalmeny, in the county of Mid Lothian, was the birth-place of WILLIAM WILKIE, who was born on the 5th of October, 1721. His father, a liberal and intelligent man, was all his life engaged in a struggle with misfortune and poverty, yet he resolved to give to his son the advantage of a classical education. The rudiments of learning young Wilkie received at the grammar school of Dalmeny, where he is said to have had the character of a boy of excellent parts. To the study of poetry he very soon manifested a propensity; and some verses on a storm, written in his tenth year, may be found in the ninth volume of ‘The Statistical Account of Scotland.’ Dr. Gleig, in the Supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, doubts their having been the production of so early a period, because they display more knowledge of the laws of electricity than, in those days, a boy could have acquired. Another writer imagines that they were composed some time between Wilkie’s fifteenth and seventeenth year, probably in his seventeenth year, and that he drew

his knowledge of electricity from Colin Maclaurin. I confess that I am unable to perceive in the lines the remotest allusion to electrical phenomena. I can see in them nothing more than a mere common place description, in tame and halting verse. As coming from a boy of ten years old, they may be tolerated ; but a youth of fifteen or seventeen would almost deserve chastisement for so despicable an attempt.

When he was thirteen Wilkie was sent to the university of Edinburgh. There he distinguished himself by his acquirements in the languages, philosophy, and theology; and there he contracted an acquaintance with many men who afterwards rose to eminence in the world of literature. Among those with whom he maintained the closest intimacy were numbered Robertson, Hume, Home (the author of *Douglas*), Ferguson, and Adam Smith. It is a singular circumstance, that he considered Adam Smith as a genius of a superior order to Hume, and as having greater originality and invention. Ferguson, however, had the largest share of his affection.

He was still pursuing his studies when his father died. The sole inheritance which was left to him was the lease and stock of a small farm, in the vicinity of the Scottish capital; while, on the other hand, three sisters were entirely dependent on him for the means of subsistence. So poor was he that he was under the necessity of borrowing the money for the burial of his parent, and he was even refused by an unfeeling uncle the loan of ten pounds for the performance of that pious duty. This sunk deep into the mind of Wilkie, and produced a powerful effect on his character.

Wilkie, however, was not of a nature to sink for want of exertion; nor was he unaccustomed to the mode of life on which he was about to enter, he having at times shared with his father in the labours

of the soil. He accordingly cultivated his little farm with a perseverance and skill which deserved to be taken as a model, and his praiseworthy efforts were crowned with success. While he was thus engaged he also continued his studies in divinity, and was at length admitted a minister of the church of Scotland, though without the cure of souls; his clerical exertions being confined to occasionally performing the duty of the clergymen in his neighbourhood.

Ten years elapsed before he obtained preferment. In 1752, however, he was recommended to the patronage of the Earl of Lauderdale, who invited him to his house, and was charmed by his talents and knowledge. His lordship first appointed him assistant to the minister of Ratho, who was far advanced in years; and when, in 1756, the minister died, he presented Wilkie to the vacant living. Wilkie now removed to the manse, or parsonage house, of Ratho, and immediately commenced a vigorous course of agricultural improvement on the glebe land. He likewise established a Farmer's Club, which flourished for many years, and in the list of whose members is to be found the name of Dr. Cullen.

Shortly after he was settled in the manse of Ratho, he made a daring effort to acquire the highest poetical honours, by the publication, in 1757, of 'The Epigoniad,' an epic poem, in nine books. He is said to have been fourteen years occupied on this work. If it be so, his toil was ill repaid; and he had the fate of Chapelain, whose *Maid of Arc* was twenty years under his hands, and at last came forth, as the Parisian wits justly declared, not a young and blooming virgin, but an old and withered hag. The hope of introducing himself to the notice of the great is asserted to have been Wilkie's original inducement to become an author, and he long hesi-

tated on the choice of a subject. He thought that his purpose would not be accomplished by a book on philosophy, as few would read it, and still fewer approve of it; a novel then appeared to him the most likely to procure fame, but he feared that it would not lead to preferment; and he finally resolved to write an epic poem.

The English lovers of literature received 'The Epigoniad' with chilling indifference, and the critics censured it with a severity which was justified by its many and obvious defects. In Scotland, however, it was more fortunate. The first edition was sold in the course of two years; and a second edition, extensively corrected, to which was added 'A Dream, in the manner of Spenser,' was issued from the press in 1759. On this occasion, Hume, with a laudable warmth of friendship, wrote for the Critical Review a long article, full of exaggerated praise, for the purpose of turning the tide of popular opinion in favour of the poem. In the excess of his zeal, he did not scruple to compare Wilkie with Homer; and he thus gave one proof more of his incompetency to sit in judgment upon poetry. The poetical taste of Hume was, in truth, of the most faulty kind. The public smiled at his fruitless labour, and obstinately persisted in refusing to allow that the Scottish bard was worthy to take his seat with Homer, Virgil, Milton, Tasso, and Camoens. The rigour of his critics Wilkie seems never to have thoroughly forgiven.

The supposed unhealthiness of the manse of Ratho produced in him a wish to change his situation, and the professorship of natural philosophy, in the university of St. Andrews, being then vacant, he became a candidate for it. Although, at the outset, he was not personally acquainted with any one of the members, and had likewise two opponents, he carried his elec-

tion. The university had no reason to regret that it had chosen him; for he performed the duties of the professorship in the most efficient manner.

On his removal to St. Andrews, he was possessed of about two hundred pounds, with which he purchased some acres of land in the neighbourhood. These he enclosed, and cultivated them to so much advantage that he set a beneficial example to the surrounding country, and so considerably improved his fortune that, in less than fourteen years, he accumulated the sum of three thousand pounds.

In 1766 the university conferred on Wilkie the degree of Doctor of Divinity; and in 1768 he published his *Fables*, which was his last work, and met with but slender encouragement. The concluding years of his life passed without the occurrence of any important event, unless we may consider as such his breaking off, for some unknown reason, his connexion with Hume and with Dr. Robertson. He died on the 10th of October, 1772, in his fifty-second year, after having suffered a lingering illness.

Wilkie had many singularities, some of which were not quite inoffensive. Having once been ill of the ague, for the cure of which he thought extraordinary perspiration necessary, he ever after slept under such a mountain mass of bedclothes as would have oppressed an African in a polar climate. Twenty-four pair of blankets are said to have been heaped upon him, and to have been declared to be not more than was sufficient to make him comfortable. For clean sheets he had an avowed aversion, and he always discarded them without ceremony. Indeed, of cleanliness he was in all cases no friend. Tobacco he chewed to an excess which disgusted; and he is supposed to have carried the practice so far as to have shortened his days by it. In his dress, which seemed to have been thrown on him, he was squalid, and even nauseous; and his wig was generally placed on his head with a ridiculous obliquity of position.

Thus far, perhaps, the world had rather a reason to laugh at than to complain of him. But it was not so in other instances. In company he would often fall into fits of absence and musing, which, when a ludicrous idea chanced to cross his mind, were terminated by a sudden burst of noisy laughter, the cause of which he would at length explain; probably not always to the satisfaction of his companions, their own peculiarities being at times the stimulus to his risible faculties. It would, however, have been well had his fits of absence been confined to private life, instead of being allowed to intrude into, and give a ludicrous appearance to, the performance of his solemn duties. ‘He generally (says Mr. Robertson) preached with his hat on his head, and often forgot to pronounce the blessing after public service. Once I saw him dispense the sacrament without consecrating the elements. On being told, he made a public apology, consecrated, and served the second table; after which, he went to the pulpit to superintend the service, forgetting to communicate himself, till informed of the omission by his elders.’ For this disregard of propriety no valid excuse can be made. Against a habit thus offensively at variance with the gravity of his clerical functions, it was the duty of Wilkie to struggle, at least whenever he came within the precincts of the house of prayer. For his forgetfulness of what he owed to polished society, he may be excused; but how can he be excused for having forgotten the veneration which he owed to his Creator, and to the dignity of religion?

It is curious that, deeply learned as he was, Wilkie could neither read nor spell correctly; and that, when he attempted to recite verse, he committed such foul murder upon quantity and pronunciation as to make his hearers suppose that he did not understand what he was reciting: a supposition which, however, was soon destroyed by the accuracy and acuteness of his criticism.

Parsimony has been laid to his charge ; but here it is not difficult to vindicate him, and even to prove that his parsimony was the child of virtue. On his entering into active life he was steeped in poverty to the lips ; or, as he awkwardly but forcibly expressed it, ‘ he had shaken hands with poverty up to the very elbow, and he never wished to see her face again.’ He had a spirit of lofty independence, which abhorred the idea of being in the power of any person ; and, under the influence of this manly spirit, he could not walk the streets with pleasure, while there was a possibility that he might be recognised by a creditor. This was a strong and an honourable motive for him to husband his pecuniary resources ; but he had another motive which was still stronger and more honourable. To his sisters he was tenderly attached, and he could not endure the thought of leaving them in an unprovided state. His health, at one period, was so much impaired as to induce him to believe that his life would be soon shortened, and consequently it was urgent that what he intended to do he should do quickly. Yet, after all, though he was sedulous to amass money, and though he loved it when amassed, it is not true that he was sordidly avaricious. Professor Dalziel attests that ‘ he was kind to persons in distress, and very liberal in his private charity.’ And Mr. Hall adds, that ‘ he was in the habit of sending very considerable sums to housekeepers in St. Andrews, whom he knew to be struggling hard under poverty, not only to escape being burthensome, but to maintain a decent appearance. This, as was conjectured before, but not known till after his death, he did in the most secret manner, exacting as a condition, profound secrecy from the parties relieved by his bounty.’ Mr. Chalmers, therefore, has justly observed, that Wilkie ‘ ought not to be blamed, if he preferred the silent dictates of his heart to the ostentatious fashion of society.’

To the base feeling of envy Wilkie was happily a stranger. He saw the friends of his youth rise to an eminence in literature which he himself could not attain, yet in no instance did he repine at their success, but ever mentioned them with kindness, and was 'fond of telling anecdotes of them in a good-natured and friendly way.'

There was one thing in which Wilkie shone pre-eminently. He was uniformly superior to almost all his competitors in conversation and debate. Few could venture to cope with him in argument; and his eloquence, though not always refined, was perspicuous, copious, and masculine; and he could accommodate it equally to the comprehension of the peasant and the man of science. Whenever he was complimented on his conversational success, he used to reply, 'When men of equal powers take opposite sides of a question, the balance is naturally cast in favour of him who takes the right one. I find that men of bright parts are very apt to take the weak or wrong side of a question, that they may display their reasoning powers. I always deliver my sincere sentiments, which I can unfold and maintain more easily than I should any other.'

'The Epigoniad,' on which Wilkie built his hopes of lasting fame, has descended quietly into oblivion. Few persons have read it, and still fewer would encounter the labour of a second perusal. I have of necessity once performed the task, and will not again undertake it, except upon some overpowering compulsion. Did Wilkie even possess the charm of originality, his unfortunate choice of a subject would doom him to be neglected. Who is there who cares about the wars or the sufferings of the Epigoni? But Wilkie has not the merit of having treated a repulsive subject in an original and interesting manner. He is, in fact, a servile imitator, the faint echo of Homer, and the reader of his poem is every moment provoked to exclaim, with Suer in the Critic,

‘Haven’t I heard that line before?’ His thoughts, his similes, his very expressions, recall Homer to our memory; but what he gives us is Homer divested of his strength and splendour. When he deviates from his immortal master, he is no less unfortunate than he is when he adheres to him. Homer declares that Agamemnon and Menelaus were not present at the siege of Thebes; yet Wilkie introduces them there, that ‘he may not deprive himself of two illustrious names, very proper for adorning his catalogue of heroes;’ though, by his so doing, he destroys that momentary belief, which a poet ought to excite, in the reality of the scene. This is as gross an error as it would be to describe Frederic of Prussia and Marshal Keith as having been present at the battle of Waterloo; and it is committed, too, in violation of the principles which he himself lays down in his preface. It is likewise no trifling objection to ‘The Epigoniad,’ that Diomed, the principal hero of it, is depicted as a worthless character, ungrateful, passionate, and perfidious. In itself, this is a flagrant sin against good taste, and it is rendered still worse by its giving a violent shock to our preconceived idea of the nature of Diomed.

If we look to the merely mechanical part of his composition, I fear that we shall not be justified in rating it very highly. ‘The language (says the author) is simple and artless.’ It is true that the language is not turgid, but it is equally true, that it is often bald and uncouth, and, not unfrequently, almost vulgar. Wilkie, like many others, has mistaken for simplicity a coarseness and poverty of dietion. Nor (to say nothing of his numerous defective rhymes, many of which are pressed into his service by sheer violence) is he more successful in the structure of his verse. A Scottish traveller, who has given some account of the poet, praises ‘the variegated harmony of Wilkie’s versification.’ A more unlucky theme

of praise he could not have selected. In its best parts, the versification of the 'Epigoniad' is monotonous, yet has none of the occasional stateliness or sweetness which we sometimes find in poems where that fault exists. In its worst parts, it is bad indeed. There are many lines in 'The Epigoniad' which have nothing more of verse than the regular number of syllables; and it unfortunately happens, too, that in those cases the beauty of the thought seldom makes any atonement for the lameness of the metre.

Yet it must not hastily be supposed, that 'The Epigoniad' is the work of a mere pretender to the name of a poet. It manifests powers, which, had they been more wisely employed, would have placed the author among the number of writers who are not fated to remain for ever untouched on the shelves of a library. Many passages in it are such as could have been conceived only by a man of poetical talent. Of these, the most happily finished, and the most pleasing, is, perhaps, the episode in the seventh book, which narrates the death of Hercules, the fraud of the Theban envoys, and the vengeance of Philoctetes.

Of the 'Dream,' which Wilkie added to the second edition of his epic, Hume says that 'it may be compared to a well polished gem, of the purest water, and cut into the most beautiful form.' Such praise defeats its purpose by its own extravagance. The Dream is, however, an ingenious and pleasing composition.

As a fabulist, Wilkie may rank in the same class with Moore, Smart, and Cotton, but below them all; for he has less elegance, less spirit, than any of them; some of his subjects are ill chosen, and some of his personifications are awkward and confused; and the moral which he deduces from his story is not always that which the story itself has led the reader to expect.

FABLES.

THE

YOUNG LADY AND THE LOOKINGGLASS.

YE deep philosophers who can
Explain that various creature, man,
Say, is there any point so nice,
As that of offering advice?
To bid your friend his errors mend
Is almost certain to offend :
Though you in softest terms advise,
Confess him good, admit him wise,
In vain you sweeten the discourse,
He thinks you call him fool, or worse :
You paint his character, and try
If he will own it, and apply ;
Without a name reprove and warn ;
Here none are hurt, and all may learn :
This, too, must fail ; the picture shown,
No man will take it for his own.
In moral lectures treat the case,
Say this is honest, that is base ;
In conversation none will bear it ;
And for the pulpit, few come near it.
And is there then no other way
A moral lesson to convey ?

Must all that shall attempt to teach,
Admonish, satirize, or preach ?
Yes, there is one, an ancient art,
By sages found to reach the heart,
Ere science, with distinctions nice,
Had fix'd what virtue is and vice,
Inventing all the various names
On which the moralist declaims :
They would by simple tales advise,
Which took the hearer by surprise ;
Alarm'd his conscience, unprepared,
Ere pride had put it on its guard ;
And made him from himself receive
The lessons which they meant to give.
That this device will oft prevail,
And gain its end when others fail,
If any shall pretend to doubt,
The tale which follows it makes out.

There was a little stubborn dame
Whom no authority could tame,
Restive by long indulgence grown,
No will she minded but her own :
At trifles oft she'd scold and fret,
Then in a corner take a seat,
And, sourly moping all the day,
Disdain alike to work or play.
Papa all softer arts had tried,
And sharper remedies applied ;
But both were vain, for every course
He took still made her worse and worse.
'Tis strange to think how female wit
So oft should make a lucky hit,
When man with all his high pretence
To deeper judgment, sounder sense,

Will err, and measures false pursue—
 'Tis very strange, I own, but true.
 Mamma observed the rising lass,
 By stealth retiring to the glass,
 To practise little airs unseen,
 In the true genius of thirteen :
 On this a deep design she laid
 To tame the humour of the maid ;
 Contriving, like a prudent mother,
 To make one folly cure another.
 Upon the wall against the seat
 Which Jessy used for her retreat,
 Whene'er by accident offended,
 A lookingglass was straight suspended,
 That it might show her how deform'd
 She look'd, and frightful when she storm'd ;
 And warn her, as she prized her beauty,
 To bend her humour to her duty—
 All this the lookingglass achieved,
 Its threats were minded and believed.

The maid, who spurn'd at all advice,
 Grew tame and gentle in a trice ;
 So when all other means had fail'd
 The silent monitor prevail'd.

Thus, fable to the humankind
 Presents an image of the mind ;
 It is a mirror where we spy
 At large our own deformity,
 And learn of course those faults to mend
 Which but to mention would offend.

THE KITE AND THE ROOKS.

YOU say 'tis vain, in verse or prose,
To tell what every body knows ;
And stretch invention to express
Plain truths which all men will confess :
Go on the argument to mend,
Prove that to know is to attend,
And that we ever keep in sight
What reason tells us once is right ;
Till this is done you must excuse
The zeal and freedom of my Muse
In hinting to the humankind,
What few deny, but fewer mind :
There is a folly which we blame,
'Tis strange that it should want a name,
For sure no other finds a place
So often in the human race ;
I mean the tendency to spy
Our neighbour's faults with sharpen'd eye,
And make his lightest failings known,
Without attending to our own.
The prude in daily use, to vex
With groundless censure half the sex,
Of rigid virtue, honour nice,
And much a foe to every vice,
Tells lies without remorse and shame,
Yet never thinks herself to blame.
A scrivener, though afraid to kill,
Yet scruples not to forge a will ;
Abhors the soldier's bloody feats,
While he as freely damns all cheats :

The reason's plain, 'tis not his way
To lie, to cozen, and betray.
But tell me, if to take by force
Is not as bad at least, or worse.
The pimp, who owns it as his trade
To poach for lechers, and be paid,
Thinks himself honest in his station,
But rails at rogues that sell the nation;
Nor would he stoop in any case,
And stain his honour for a place.
To mark this error of mankind
The tale which follows is design'd.

A flight of rooks one harvest morn
Had stopp'd upon a field of corn,
Just when a kite, as authors say,
Was passing on the wing that way:
His honest heart was fill'd with pain,
To see the farmer lose his grain,
So, lighting gently on a shock,
He thus the foragers bespoke:—
‘ Believe me, sirs, you're much to blame;
'Tis strange, that neither fear nor shame
Can keep you from your usual way
Of stealth, and pilfering every day.
No sooner has the' industrious swain
His field turn'd up, and sow'd the grain,
But ye come flocking on the wing,
Prepared to snatch it ere it spring:
And, after all his toil and care,
Leave every furrow spoil'd and bare:
If aught escapes your greedy bills,
Which nursed by summer grows and fills,
'Tis still your prey: and though ye know
No rook did ever till or sow,

Ye boldly reap, without regard
To justice, industry's reward,
And use it freely as your own,
Though men and cattle should get none.
I never did in any case
Descend to practices so base :
Though stung with hunger's sharpest pain,
I still have scorn'd to touch a grain,
E'en when I had it in my power
To do't with safety every hour:
For, trust me, nought that can be gain'd
Is worth a character unstain'd.'

Thus with a face austere grave
Harangued the hypocrite and knave;
And, answering from amidst the flock,
A rook with indignation spoke.
' What has been said is strictly true,
Yet comes not decently from you;
For sure it indicates a mind
From selfish passions more than blind,
To miss your greater crimes, and quote
Our lighter failings thus by rote.
I must confess we wrong the swain
Too oft by pilfering of his grain :
But is our guilt like yours, I pray,
Who rob and murder every day?
No harmless bird can mount the skies
But you attack him as he flies;
And when at eve he lights to rest,
You stoop and snatch him from his nest.
The husbandman, who seems to share
So large a portion of your care,
Say, is he ever off his guard,
While you are hovering o'er the yard?

He knows too well your usual tricks,
 Your ancient spite to tender chicks,
 And that you like a felon watch
 For something to surprise and snatch.'

At this rebuke so just, the Kite,
 Surprised, abash'd, and silenced quite,
 And proved a villain to his face,
 Straight soar'd aloft and left the place.

THE

GRASSHOPPER AND THE GLOWWORM.

WHEN ignorance possess'd the schools,
 And reign'd by Aristotle's rules,
 Ere Verulam, like dawning light,
 Rose to dispel the Gothic night,
 A man was taught to shut his eyes,
 And grow abstracted—to be wise.
 Nature's broad volume fairly spread,
 Where all true science might be read,
 The wisdom of the' Eternal Mind,
 Declared and publish'd to mankind,
 Was quite neglected, for the whims
 Of mortals and their airy dreams :
 By narrow principles and few,
 By hasty maxims, oft untrue,
 By words and phrases ill defined,
 Evasive truth they hoped to bind;
 Which still escaped them, and the elves
 At last caught nothing but themselves.
 Nor is this folly modern quite,
 'Tis ancient too; the Stagyrte
 Improved at first, and taught his school
 By rules of art to play the fool.

E'en Plato, from example bad,
Would oft turn sophist, and run mad :
Make Socrates himself discourse
Like Clarke and Leibnitz, oftentimes worse ;
'Bout quirks and subtilties contending,
Beyond all human comprehending.
From some strange bias men pursue
False knowledge still in place of true ;
Build airy systems of their own,
This moment raised, the next pull'd down ;
While few attempt to catch those rays
Of truth which nature still displays
Throughout the universal plan,
From moss and mushrooms up to man.
This sure were better ; but we hate
To borrow when we can create ;
And therefore stupidly prefer
Our own conceits, by which we err,
To all the wisdom to be gain'd
From Nature and her laws explain'd.

One evening, when the sun was set,
A Grasshopper and Glowworm met
Upon a hillock in a dale
(As Mab the fairy tells the tale):
Vain and conceited of his spark,
Which brighten'd as the night grew dark,
The shining reptile swell'd with pride
To see his rays on every side,
Mark'd by a circle on the ground
Of livid light some inches round.

Quoth he, ' If glowworms never shone,
To light the earth, when day is gone,
In spite of all the stars that burn,
Primeval darkness would return :

They're less and dimmer, one may see,
 Besides much farther off than we ;
 And therefore through a long descent
 Their light is scatter'd quite and spent :
 While ours, compacter and at hand,
 Keeps night and darkness at a stand,
 Diffused around in many a ray,
 Whose brightness emulates the day.'

This pass'd, and more, without dispute ;
 The patient Grasshopper was mute :
 But soon the east began to glow
 With light appearing from below,
 And level from the ocean's streams
 The moon emerging shot her beams,
 To gild the mountains and the woods,
 And shake and glitter on the floods.
 The Glowworm, when he found his light
 Grow pale, and faint, and vanish quite
 Before the moon's prevailing ray,
 Began his envy to display.

'That globe (quoth he) which seems so fair,
 Which brightens all the earth and air,
 And sends its beams so far abroad,
 Is nought, believe me, but a clod ;
 A thing which, if the sun were gone,
 Has no more light in 't than a stone ;
 Subsisting merely by supplies
 From Phœbus, in the nether skies :
 My light, indeed, I must confess,
 On some occasions will be less ;
 But spite itself will hardly say
 I'm debtor for a single ray ;
 'Tis all my own, and on the score
 Of merit mounts to ten times more

Than any planet can demand
For light dispensed at second hand.'

To hear the paltry insect boast
The Grasshopper all patience lost :

Quoth he, ' My friend, it may be so,
The moon with borrow'd light may glow ;
That your faint glimmering is your own,
I think is question'd yet by none :
But sure the office to collect
The solar brightness and reflect,
To catch those rays that would be spent
Quite useless in the firmament,
And turn them downwards on the shade
Which absence of the sun has made,
Amounts to more, in point of merit,
Than all your tribe did e'er inherit :
Oft by that planet's friendly ray
The midnight traveller finds his way :
Safe, by the favour of his beams,
Midst precipices, lakes, and streams ;
While you mislead him, and your light,
Seen like a cottage lamp by night,
With hopes to find a safe retreat,
Allures and tempts him to his fate :
As this is so, I needs must call
The merit of your light but small :
You need not boast on't, though your own ;
'Tis light, indeed, but worse than none ;
Unlike to what the moon supplies,
Which you call borrow'd, and despise.'

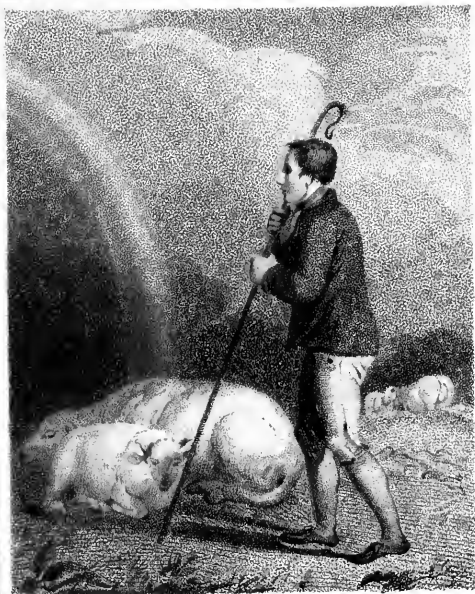
THE BOY AND THE RAINBOW.

DECLARE, ye sages, if ye find
 'Mongst animals of every kind,
 Of each condition, sort, and size,
 From whales and elephants to flies,
 A creature that mistakes his plan,
 And errs so constantly as man.
 Each kind pursues his proper good,
 And seeks for pleasure, rest, and food,
 As nature points, and never errs
 In what it chooses and prefers ;
 Man only blunders, though possess'd
 Of talents far above the rest.

Descend to instances and try ;
 An ox will scarce attempt to fly,
 Or leave his pasture in the wood
 With fishes to explore the flood.
 Man only acts, of every creature,
 In opposition to his nature.
 The happiness of humankind
 Consists in rectitude of mind,
 A will subdued to reason's sway,
 And passions practised to obey ;
 An open and a generous heart,
 Refined from selfishness and art ;
 Patience, which mocks at fortune's power,
 And wisdom, never sad nor sour :
 In these consists our proper bliss ;
 Else Plato reasons much amiss.
 But foolish mortals still pursue
 False happiness in place of true ;

Ambition serves us for a guide,
Or lust, or avarice, or pride ;
While reason no assent can gain,
And revelation warns in vain.
Hence through our lives in every stage,
From infancy itself to age,
A happiness we toil to find,
Which still avoids us like the wind ;
E'en when we think the prize our own,
At once 'tis vanish'd, lost, and gone.
You'll ask me why I thus rehearse
All Epictetus in my verse ;
And if I fondly hope to please
With dry reflections such as these,
So trite, so hackney'd, and so stale ?
I'll take the hint, and tell a tale.

One evening as a simple swain
His flock attended on the plain,
The shining bow he chanced to spy,
Which warns us when a shower is nigh ;
With brightest rays it seem'd to glow,
Its distance eighty yards or so.
This bumpkin had, it seems, been told
The story of the cup of gold,
Which fame reports is to be found
Just where the rainbow meets the ground ;
He therefore felt a sudden itch
To seize the goblet, and be rich ;
Hoping (yet hopes are oft but vain),
No more to toil through wind and rain,
But sit indulging by the fire,
Midst ease and plenty, like a squire :
He mark'd the very spot of land
On which the rainbow seem'd to stand,



Drawn by Rich^d Westall. R.A.

Engraved by R. Meadows

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And stepping forwards at his leisure,
 Expected to have found the treasure.
 But as he moved the colour'd ray
 Still changed its place and slipp'd away,
 As seeming his approach to shun;
 From walking he began to run,
 But all in vain, it still withdrew
 As nimbly as he could pursue;
 At last through many a bog and lake,
 Rough craggy rock, and thorny brake,
 It led the easy fool till night
 Approach'd, then vanish'd in his sight,
 And left him to compute his gains,
 With nought but labour for his pains.



THE SWAN AND THE OTHER BIRDS.

EACH candidate for public fame
 Engages in a desperate game:
 His labour he will find but lost,
 Or less than half repaid, at most.
 To prove this point I shall not choose
 The arguments which Stoics use;
 That human life is but a dream,
 And few things in it what they seem;
 That praise is vain and little worth,
 An empty bauble, and so forth.
 I'll offer one, but of a kind
 Not half so subtle and refined;
 Which, when the rest are out of sight,
 May sometimes chance to have its weight.
 The man who sets his merits high,
 To glitter in the public eye,

Should have defects but very small,
Or, strictly speaking, none at all:
For that success which spreads his fame
Provokes each envious tongue to blame;
And makes his faults and failings known
Where'er his better parts are shown.

Upon a time, as poets sing,
The birds all waited on their king,
His hymeneal rites to grace;
A flowery meadow was the place;
They all were frolicsome and gay
Amidst the pleasures of the day,
And, ere the festival was closed,
A match at singing was proposed.
The queen herself a wreath prepared,
To be the conqueror's reward;
With store of pinks and daisies in it,
And many a songster tried to win it;
But all the judges soon confess'd
The swan superior to the rest;
He got the garland from the bride,
With honour and applause beside.
A tattling goose, with envy stung,
Although herself she ne'er had sung,
Took this occasion to reveal
What swans seem studious to conceal,
And, skill'd in satire's artful ways,
Invective introduced with praise.

' The swan (quoth she), upon my word,
Deserves applause from every bird:
By proof his charming voice you know,
His feathers soft and white as snow;
And if you saw him when he swims
Majestic on the silver streams,

He'd seem complete in all respects:
But nothing is without defects;
For that is true, which few would think,
His legs and feet are black as ink.'—

‘As black as ink—if this be true,
To me 'tis wonderful and new
(The sovereign of the birds replied),
But soon the truth on't shall be tried.
Sir, show your limbs, and, for my sake,
Confute at once this foul mistake;
For I'll maintain, and I am right,
That, like your feathers, they are white.’

‘Sir (quoth the swan), it would it vain
For me a falsehood to maintain;
My legs are black, and proof will show
Beyond dispute that they are so:
But if I had not got a prize
Which glitters much in some folk's eyes,
Not half the birds had ever known
What truth now forces me to own.’

THE RAKE AND THE HERMIT.

A YOUTH, a pupil of the town,
Philosopher and atheist grown,
Benighted once upon the road,
Found out a hermit's lone abode,
Whose hospitality in need
Relieved the traveller and his steed,
For both sufficiently were tired,
Well drench'd in ditches and bemired.
Hunger the first attention claims;
Upon the coals a rasher flames,

Dry crusts, and liquor something stale,
Were added to make up a meal;
At which our traveller as he sat
By intervals began to chat:
‘ ’Tis odd (quoth he), to think what strains
Of folly govern some folk’s brains!
What makes you choose this wild abode —
You’ll say, ’tis to converse with God!
Alas, I fear, ’tis all a whim:
You never saw or spoke with him.
They talk of Providence’s power,
And say it rules us every hour;
To me, all nature seems confusion,
And such weak fancies mere delusion.
Say, if it ruled and govern’d right,
Could there be such a thing as night;
Which, when the sun has left the skies,
Puts all things in a deep disguise?
If then a traveller chance to stray
The least step from the public way,
He’s soon in endless mazes lost,
As I have found it to my cost.
Besides, the gloom which nature wears
Assists imaginary fears
Of ghosts and goblins, from the waves
Of sulphurous lakes, and yawning graves;
All sprung from superstitious seed,
Like other maxims of the creed.
For my part, I reject the tales
Which faith suggests when reason fails:
And reason nothing understands,
Unwarranted by eyes and hands.
These subtle essences, like wind,
Which some have dream’d of, and call mind,

It ne'er admits; nor joins the lie
Which says, men rot, but never die.
It holds all future things in doubt,
And therefore wisely leaves them out:
Suggesting what is worth our care,
To take things present as they are,
Our wisest course; the rest is folly,
The fruit of spleen and melancholy.—

‘ Sir (quoth the hermit), I agree
That reason still our guide should be;
And will admit her as the test
Of what is true, and what is best:
But reason sure would blush for shame
At what you mention, in her name;
Her dictates are sublime and holy;
Impiety’s the child of folly:
Reason, with measured steps and slow,
To things above from things below
Ascends, and guides us through her sphere
With caution, vigilance, and care:
Faith in the utmost frontier stands,
And reason puts her in her hands,
But not till her commission given
Is found authentic, and from heaven.
’Tis strange that man, a reasoning creature,
Should miss a God in viewing nature:
Whose high perfections are display’d
In every thing his hands have made:
E’en when we think their traces lost,
When found again, we see them most;
The night itself, which you would blame
As something wrong in nature’s frame,
Is but a curtain to invest
Her weary children, when at rest:

Like that which mothers draw, to keep
The light off from a child asleep.
Beside, the fears which darkness breeds,
At least augments, in vulgar heads,
Are far from useless, when the mind
Is narrow and to earth confined :
They make the worldling think with pain
On frauds and oaths and ill got gain ;
Force from the ruffian's hand the knife
Just raised against his neighbour's life ;
And, in defence of virtue's cause,
Assist each sanction of the laws.
But souls serene, where wisdom dwells,
And superstitious dread expels,
The silent majesty of night
Excites to take a nobler flight :
With saints and angels to explore
The wonders of creating power ;
And lifts on contemplation's wings
Above the sphere of mortal things :
Walk forth and tread those dewy plains
Where night in awful silence reigns :
The sky's serene, the air is still,
The woods stand listening on each hill,
To catch the sounds that sink and swell
Wide floating from the evening bell,
While foxes howl and beetles hum,
Sounds which make silence still more dumb :
And try if folly, rash and rude,
Dares on the sacred hour intrude,
Then turn your eyes to Heaven's broad frame,
Attempt to quote those lights by name,
Which shine so thick and spread so far ;
Conceive a sun in every star,

Round which unnumber'd planets roll,
 While comets shoot athwart the whole.
 From system still to system ranging,
 Their various benefits exchanging,
 And shaking from their flaming hair
 The things most needed every where.
 Explore this glorious scene, and say
 That night discovers less than day;
 That 'tis quite useless, and a sign
 That chance disposes, not design:
 Whoe'er maintains it, I'll pronounce
 Him either mad, or else a dunce.
 For reason, though 'tis far from strong,
 Will soon find out that nothing's wrong,
 From signs and evidences clear,
 Of wise contrivance every where.'

The hermit ended; and the youth
 Became a convert to the truth;
 At least he yielded; and confess'd
 That all was order'd for the best.

THE BREEZE AND THE TEMPEST.

THAT nation boasts a happy fate,
 Whose prince is good as well as great;
 Calm peace at home with plenty reigns,
 The law its proper course obtains;
 Abroad the public is respected,
 And all its interests are protected:
 But when his genius, weak or strong,
 Is by ambition pointed wrong,
 When private greatness has possess'd,
 In place of public good, his breast;

'Tis certain, and I'll prove it true,
That every mischief must ensue.
On some pretence a war is made,
The citizen must change his trade;
His steers the husbandman unyokes,
The shepherd too must quit his flocks,
His harmless life, and honest gain,
To rob, to murder, and be slain:
The fields, once fruitful, yield no more
Their yearly produce as before:
Each useful plant neglected dies,
While idle weeds licentious rise
Unnumber'd, to usurp the land
Where yellow harvests used to stand.
Lean famine soon in course succeeds;
Diseases follow as she leads.
No infant bands at close of day
In every village sport and play.
The streets are throng'd with orphans dying
For want of bread, and widows crying;
Fierce rapine walks abroad unchain'd,
By civil order not restrain'd;
Without regard to right and wrong,
The weak are injured by the strong.
The hungry mouth but rarely tastes
The fattening food which riot wastes;
All ties of conscience lose their force,
E'en sacred oaths grow words of course.
By what strange cause are kings inclined
To heap such mischief on mankind?
What powerful arguments control
The native dictates of the soul?
The love of glory, and a name
Loud sounded by the trump of fame:

Nor shall they miss their end, unless
 Their guilty projects want success.
 Let one possess'd of sovereign sway
 Invade, and murder, and betray;
 Let war and rapine fierce be hurl'd
 Through half the nations of the world;
 And prove successful in a course
 Of bad designs, and actions worse;
 At once a demigod he grows,
 And, incensed both in verse and prose,
 Becomes the idol of mankind;
 Though to what's good he's weak and blind;
 Approved, applauded, and respected,
 While better rulers are neglected.

Where Shotts's airy tops divide
 Fair Lothian from the vale of Clyde,
 A tempest from the east and north
 Fraught with the vapours of the Forth,
 In passing to the Irish seas,
 Once chanced to meet the western breeze.
 The tempest hail'd him with a roar,
 ' Make haste and clear the way before ;
 No paltry zephyr must pretend
 To stand before me, or contend :
 Begone, or in a whirlwind toss'd
 Your weak existence will be lost.'

The tempest thus:—The breeze replied,
 ' If both our merits should be tried,
 Impartial justice would decree
 That you should yield the way to me.'

At this the tempest raved and storm'd,
 Grew black and ten times more deform'd.
 ' What qualities (quoth he) of thine,
 Vain flattering wind, can equal mine ?

Breathed from some river, lake, or bog,
Your rise at first is in a fog ;
And, creeping slowly o'er the meads,
Scarce stir the willows or the reeds ;
While those that feel you hardly know
The certain point from which you blow.
From earth's deep womb, the child of fire,
Fierce, active, vigorous, like my sire,
I rush to light ; the mountains quake
With dread, and all their forests shake ;
The globe itself, convulsed and torn,
Feels pangs unusual when I'm born :
Now free in air with sovereign sway
I rule, and all the clouds obey :
From east to west my power extends,
Where day begins, and where it ends :
And from Boötes downwards far,
Athwart the track of every star.
Through me the polar deep disdains
To sleep in winter's frosty chains ;
But, roused to rage indignant, heaves
Huge rocks of ice upon its waves :
While dread tornados lift on high
The broad Atlantic to the sky,
I rule the elemental roar,
And strew with shipwrecks every shore :
Nor less at land my power is known,
From Zembla to the burning zone.
I bring Tartarian frosts to kill
The bloom of summer ; when I will
Wide desolation doth appear
To mingle and confound the year :
From cloudy Atlas wrapp'd in night,
On Barca's sultry plains I light,

And make at once the desert rise
 In dusty whirlwinds to the skies;
 In vain the traveller turns his steed,
 And shuns me with his utmost speed;
 I overtake him as he flies,
 O'erblown he struggles, pants, and dies.
 Where some proud city lifts in air
 Its spires, I make a desert bare;
 And when I choose, for pastime's sake,
 Can with a mountain shift a lake;
 The Nile himself, at my command,
 Oft hides his head beneath the sand,
 And, midst dry deserts blown and toss'd,
 For many a sultry league is lost.
 All this I do with perfect ease,
 And can repeat whene'er I please:
 What merit makes you then pretend
 With me to argue and contend,
 When all you boast of force or skill
 Is scarce enough to turn a mill,
 Or help the swain to clear his corn,
 The servile tasks for which you're born?

' Sir (quoth the breeze), if force alone
 Must pass for merit, I have none;
 At least I'll readily confess
 That your's is greater, mine is less.
 But merit rightly understood
 Consists alone in doing good;
 And therefore you yourself must see
 That preference is due to me:
 I cannot boast to rule the skies
 Like you, and make the ocean rise,
 Nor e'er with shipwrecks strew the shore,
 For wives and orphans to deplore.

Mine is the happier task, to please
The mariner, and smooth the seas,
And waft him safe from foreign harms
To bless his consort's longing arms.
With you I boast not to confound
The seasons in their annual round,
And mar that harmony in nature
That comforts every living creature.
But oft from warmer climes I bring
Soft airs to introduce the spring;
With genial heat unlock the soil,
And urge the ploughman to his toil;
I bid the opening blooms unfold
Their streak of purple, blue, and gold,
And waft their fragrance to impart
That new delight to every heart,
Which makes the shepherd all day long
To carol sweet his vernal song:
The summer's sultry heat to cool,
From every river, lake, and pool,
I skim fresh airs. The tawny swain,
Who turns at noon the furrow'd plain,
Refresh'd and trusting in my aid,
His task pursues, and scorns the shade:
And e'en on Afric's sultry coast,
Where such immense exploits you boast,
I blow to cool the panting flocks
Midst deserts brown and sunburnt rocks,
And health and vigour oft supply
To such as languish, faint, and die:
Those humbler offices you named,
To own I'll never be ashamed,
With twenty others that conduce
To public good or private use,

The meanest of them far outweighs
The whole amount of all your praise ;
If to give happiness and joy
Excels the talent to destroy.'

The tempest, that till now had lent
Attention to the argument,
Again began (his patience lost)
To rage, to threaten, huff, and boast :
Since reasons fail'd, resolved in course
The question to decide by force,
And his weak opposite to brave—
The breeze retreated to a cave
To shelter, till the raging blast
Had spent its fury, and was pass'd.

THE CROW AND OTHER BIRDS.

CONTAINING A USEFUL HINT TO THE CRITICS.

IN ancient times, tradition says,
When birds like men would strive for praise ;
The bullfinch, nightingale, and thrush,
With all that chant from tree or bush,
Would often meet, in song to vie ;
The kinds that sing not, sitting by.
A knavish crow, it seems, had got
The knack to criticise by rote :
He understood each learned phrase,
As well as critics nowadays :
Some say, he learn'd them from an owl,
By listening where he taught a school.
'Tis strange to tell, this subtle creature,
Though nothing musical by nature,

Had learn'd so well to play his part,
With nonsense couch'd in terms of art,
As to be own'd by all at last
Director of the public taste.
Then, puff'd with insolence and pride,
And sure of numbers on his side,
Each song he freely criticised;
What he approved not was despised :
But one false step in evil hour
For ever stripp'd him of his power.
Once when the birds assembled sat,
All listening to his formal chat;
By instinct nice he chanced to find
A cloud approaching in the wind,
And ravens hardly can refrain
From croaking, when they think of rain :
His wonted song he sung: the blunder
Amazed and scared them, worse than thunder;
For no one thought so harsh a note
Could ever sound from any throat:
They all at first with mute surprise
Each on his neighbour turn'd his eyes:
But scorn succeeding soon took place,
And might be read in every face,
All this the raven saw with pain,
And strove his credit to regain.

Quoth he: 'The solo which ye heard
In public should not have appear'd :
The trifle of an idle hour,
To please my mistress once when sour:
My voice, that's somewhat rough and strong,
Might chance the melody to wrong,
But, tried by rules, you'll find the grounds
Most perfect and harmonious sounds.'

He reason'd thus; but, to his trouble,
 At every word the laugh grew double :
 At last, o'ercome with shame and spite,
 He flew away quite out of sight.

THE HARE AND THE PARTAN¹.

The chief design of this fable is, to give a true specimen of the Scotch dialect, where it may be supposed to be most perfect; namely, in Mid-Lothian, the seat of the capital. The style is precisely that of the vulgar Scotch; and that the matter might be suitable to it, I chose for the subject a little story adapted to the ideas of peasants. It is a tale commonly told in Scotland among the country people; and may be looked upon as of the kind of those *Aniles Fabellæ*, in which Horace observes his country neighbours were accustomed to convey their rustic philosophy.

A CANNY man² will scarce provoke
 Ae³ creature livin, for a joke;
 For be they weak, or be they strang⁴,
 A jibe⁵ leaves after it a stang⁶

¹ The crab.

² A canny man signifies nearly the same thing as a prudent man: but when the Scotch say that a person is *not* canny, they mean not that they are imprudent, but mischievous and dangerous. If the term *not canny* is applied to persons without being explained, it charges them with sorcery and witchcraft.

³ One.

⁴ The Scotch always turn o in the syllable *ong*, into *a*. In place of *long*, they say *lang*; in place of *tongs*, *tangs*; as here, *strang* for *strong*.

⁵ A satirical jest.

⁶ Sting.

To mak them think on't; and a laird⁷
 May find a beggar sae prepair'd,
 Wi pawks⁸ and wiles, whar pith⁹ is wantin,
 As soon will mak him rue his tauntin.

Ye hae my moral, if am able
 All fit it nicely wi a fable.

A hare, ae morning, chanced to see
 A partan creepin on a lee¹⁰;
 A fishwife¹¹, wha was early oot,
 Had drapt¹² the creature thereaboot.
 Mawkin¹³ bumbased¹⁴ and frighted sair¹⁵,
 To see a thing but hide and hair¹⁶,
 Which if it stur'd not might be ta'en¹⁷
 For naething ither than a stane¹⁸,
 A squunt-wise¹⁹ wambling²⁰, sair beset
 Wi gerse and rashes²¹, like a net,

⁷ A gentleman of an estate in land.

⁸ Stratagems.

⁹ Strength.

¹⁰ A piece of ground let run into grass for pasture.

¹¹ A woman that sells fish. It is to be observed, that the Scotch always use the word *wife* where the English would use the word *woman*.

¹² Dropt.

¹³ A cant name for a hare, like that of Reynard for a fox, or Grimalkin for a cat, &c.

¹⁴ Astonished.

¹⁵ Sore. I shall observe, once for all, that the Scotch avoid the vowels *o* and *u*; and have in innumerable instances supplied their places with *a* and *e*, or diphthongs in which these letters are predominant.

¹⁶ Without hide and hair.

¹⁷ Taken.

¹⁸ Nothing other than a stone.

¹⁹ Obliquely or asquat.

²⁰ A feeble motion like that of a worm.

²¹ Grass and rushes. The vowel *e*, which comes in place

First thought to rin²² for't (for bi kind
 A hare's nae fechter²³, ye maun mind²⁴):
 But seeing that wi²⁵ aw its strength
 It scarce could creep a tether length²⁶,
 The hare grew baulder²⁷ and cam near;
 Turn'd playsome, and forgot her fear.
 Quoth Mawkin, ' Was there ere in nature
 Sae feckless²⁸ and sae poor a creature ?
 It scarcely kens²⁹, or am mistaen,
 The way to gang³⁰ or stand its lane³¹.
 See how it steitters³²; all be bund³³
 To rin a mile of up-hill grund
 Before it gets a rig-braid frae³⁴
 The place its in, though doon the brae³⁵.'

of *a*, is by a metathesis put between the consonants *g* and *r* to soften the sound.

²² Run.

²³ Fighter.

²⁴ You must remember.

²⁵ With all.

²⁶ The length of a rope used to confine cattle, when they pasture, to a particular spot.

²⁷ Bolder.

²⁸ Feeble. *Feckful* and *feckless* signify *strong* and *weak*, I suppose from the verb to *effect*.

²⁹ Knows, or I am in a mistake.

³⁰ Go.

³¹ Alone, or without assistance.

³² Walks in a weak stumbling way.

³³ I will be bound.

³⁴ The breadth of a ridge from. In Scotland about four fathoms.

³⁵ An ascent or descent. It is worth observing, that the Scotch, when they mention a rising ground with respect to the whole of it, they call it a *knau*, if small; and a *hill*, if great: but if they respect only one side of either, they call it a *brae*, which is probably a corruption of the English word *brow*, according to the analogy I mentioned before.

Mawkin wi this began to frisk,
 And thinkin ³⁶ there was little risk,
 Clapt baith her feet on partan's back,
 And turn'd him awald ³⁷ in a crack.
 To see the creature sprawl, her sport
 Grew twice as good, yet proved but short.
 For patting wi her fit ³⁸, in play,
 Just whar the partan's nippers lay,
 He gript it fast, which made her squeel,
 And think she bourded ³⁹ wi the deil.
 She strave to rin, and make a fistle:
 The tither catch'd a tough bur thistle ⁴⁰;
 Which held them baith, till o'er a dyke
 A herd cam stending ⁴¹ wi his tyke ⁴²,
 And fell'd poor mawkin, sairly ruen,
 Whan forced to drink of her ain brewin ⁴³.

³⁶ Thinking. When polysyllables terminate in *ing*, the Scotch almost always neglect the *g*, which softens the sound.

³⁷ Topsy turvy.

³⁸ Foot.

³⁹ To *bourd* with any person, is to attack him in the way of jest.

⁴⁰ Thistle. The Scotch, though they commonly affect soft sounds, and throw out consonants and take in vowels, in order to obtain them, yet in some cases, of which this is an example, they do the very reverse; and bring in superfluous consonants to roughen the sound, when such sounds are more agreeable to the roughness of the thing represented.

⁴¹ Leaping.

⁴² Dog.

⁴³ Brewing. 'To drink of one's own brewing,' is a proverbial expression, for suffering the effects of one's own misconduct. The English say, 'As they bake, so let them brew.'

A DREAM.

In the Manner of Spenser¹.

ONE evening as by pleasant Forth I stray'd
 In pensive mood, and meditated still
 On poets' learned toil, with scorn repaid
 By envy's bitter spite, and want of skill;
 A cave I found, which open'd in a hill.
 The floor was sand, with various shells yblended,
 Through which, in slow meanders, crept a rill;
 The roof, by Nature's cunning sleight suspended:
 Thither my steps I turn'd, and there my journey
 ended.

Upon the ground my listless limbs I laid,
 Lull'd by the murmur of the passing stream:
 Then sleep, soft stealing, did my eyes invade;
 And waking thought, soon ended in a dream.
 Transported to a region I did seem,
 Which with Thessalian Tempe might compare:
 Of verdant shade composed, and watery gleam;
 Not even Valdarno, thought so passing fair, [rare.
 Might match this pleasant land, in all perfections

One, like a hoary palmer, near a brook,
 Under an arbour, seated did appear;
 A shepherd-swain, attending, held a book,
 And seem'd to read therein that he mote hear.
 From curiosity I stepped near;
 But ere I reach'd the place where they did sit,
 The whispering breezes wafted to my ear

¹ Published at the close of 'The Epigoniad,' to which poem it particularly alludes.

The sound of rhymes which I myself had writ:
Rhymes much, alas! too mean, for such a judge
unfit.

For him he seem'd who sung Achilles' rage,
In lofty numbers that shall never die;
And wise Ulysses' tedious pilgrimage,
So long the sport of sharp adversity:
The praises of his merit, Fame on high,
With her shrill trump, for ever loud doth sound;
With him no bard for excellence can vie,
Of all that late or ancient e'er were found;
So much he doth surpass e'en bards the most re-
nown'd.

The shepherd-swain invited me to come
Up to the arbour where they seated were;
For Homer call'd me: much I fear'd the doom
Which such a judge seem'd ready to declare.
As I approach'd, with mickle dread and care,
He thus address'd me:—' Sir, the cause explain
Why all your story here is told so bare;
Few circumstances mix'd of various grain;
Such, surely, much enrich and raise a poet's
strain.'

' Certes (quoth I), the critics are the cause
Of this, and many other mischiefs more;
Who tie the Muses to such rigid laws,
That all their songs are frivolous and poor;
They cannot now, as oft they did before,
Ere powerful prejudice had clipt their wings,
Nature's domain with boundless flight explore,
And traffic freely in her precious things:
Each bard now fears the rod, and trembles while
he sings.

‘ Though Shakspeare, still disdaining narrow rules,
His bosom fill’d with Nature’s sacred fire,
Broke all the cobweb limits fix’d by fools,
And left the world to blame him and admire.
Yet his reward few mortals would desire;
For, of his learned toil, the only meed,
That ever I could find he did acquire,
Is that our dull, degenerate age of lead
Says that he wrote by chance, and that he scarce
could read.’

‘ I ween (quoth he) that poets are to blame
When they submit to critics’ tyranny :
For learned wights there is no greater shame
Than blindly with their dictates to comply.
Whoever taught the eagle how to fly,
Whose wit did e’er his airy track define,
When with free wing he claims his native sky ;
Say, will he steer his course by rule and line ?
Certes, he’d scorn the bounds that would his flight
confine.

‘ Not that the Muses’ art is void of rules :
Many there are, I wot, and stricter far
Than those which pedants dictate from the schools,
Who wage with wit and taste eternal war :
For foggy ignorance their sight doth mar ;
Nor can their low conception ever reach
To what dame Nature, crown’d with many a star,
Explains to such as know her learned speech ;
But few can comprehend the lessons she doth teach.

‘ As many as the stars that gild the sky,
As many as the flowers that paint the ground,
In number like the insect tribes that fly,
The various forms of beauty still are found ;

That with strict limits no man may them bound,
And say that this, and this alone is right:

Experience soon such rashness would confound,
And make its folly obvious to the light;
For such presumption sure becomes not mortal
wight.

‘ Therefore, each bard should freely entertain
The hints which pleasing Fancy gives at will;
Nor curb her sallies with too strict a rein,
Nature subjecting to her handmaid Skill:
And you yourself in this have done but ill;
With many more, who have not comprehended
That genius, cramp’t, will rarely mount the hill,
Whose forked summit with the clouds is blended;
Therefore, when next you write, let this defect
be mended.

‘ But, like a friend, who candidly reproves
For faults and errors which he doth espy,
Each vice he freely marks; yet always loves
To mingle favour with severity.
Certes, (quoth he) I cannot well deny,
That you in many things may hope to please:
You force a barbarous northern tongue to ply,
And bend it to your purposes with ease;
Though rough as Albion’s rocks, and hoarser than
her seas.

‘ Nor are your tales, I wot, so loosely yoked
As those which Colin Clout² did tell before;
Nor with description crowded so, and choked,
Which, thinly spread, will always please the
more.

² Spenser.

Colin, I wot, was rich in Nature's store;
 More rich than you, had more than he could use:
 But mad Orlando³ taught him had his lore;
 Whose flights, at random, oft misled his Muse:
 To follow such a guide few prudent men would
 choose.

' Me you have follow'd; Nature was my guide;
 To this the merit of your verse is owing:
 And know for certain, let it check your pride,
 That all you boast of is of my bestowing.
 The flowers I see, through all your garden
 blowing,
 Are mine; most part, at least, I might demand,
 Might claim them, as a crop of my own sowing,
 And leave but few, thin scatter'd o'er the land:
 A claim so just, I wot, you could not well with-
 stand.'

' Certes, (quoth I) that justice were full hard
 Which me alone would sentence to restore;
 When many a learned sage, and many a bard,
 Are equally your debtors, or much more.
 Let Tityrus⁴ himself produce his store,
 Take what is thine, but little will remain:
 Little, I wot, and that indebted sore
 To Ascrea's bard⁵, and Arethusa's swain⁶;
 And others too beside, who lent him many a strain.

' Nor could the modern bards afford to pay,
 Whose songs exalt the champions of the Cross;
 Take from each hoard thy sterling gold away,
 And little will remain but worthless dross.

³ Ariosto, so called from his hero.

⁴ Virgil.

⁵ Hesiod.

⁶ Theocritus.

Not bards alone could ill support the loss;
But sages too, whose theft suspicion shunn'd:
E'en that sly Greek⁷, who steals and hides so
close,
Were half a bankrupt, if he should refund;
While these are all forborne, shall I alone be
dunn'd?

He smiled; and from his wreath, which well
could spare [clad,
Such boon, the wreath with which his locks were
Pluck'd a few leaves to hide my temples bare;
The present I received with heart full glad.
'Henceforth, (quoth I) I never will be sad;
For now I shall obtain my share of fame:
Nor will licentious wit, or envy bad,
With bitter taunts, my verses dare to blame:
This garland shall protect them, and exalt my
name!

But dreams are short; for as I thought to lay
My limbs at ease upon the flowery ground,
And drink, with greedy ear, what he might say,
As murmuring waters sweet, or music's sound,
My sleep departed; and I, waking, found
Myself again by Fortha's pleasant stream.

Homewards I stepp'd, in meditation drown'd,
Reflecting on the meaning of my dream;
Which let each wight interpret as him best doth
seem.

⁷ Plato, reckoned by Longinus one of the greatest imitators of Homer.

A DIALOGUE.

THE AUTHOR AND A FRIEND.

‘ HERE, take your papers’—‘ Have you look’d them o’er?’—

‘ Yes, half a dozen times, I think, or more.’—

‘ And will they pass?’—‘ They’ll serve but for a day ;

Few books can now do more : You know the way ;

A trifle’s puff’d till one edition’s sold,

In half a week at most a book grows old.

The penny turn’d’s the only point in view ;

So every thing will pass, if ’tis but new.’—

‘ By what you say, I easily can guess

You rank me with the drudges for the press ;

Who from their garrets shower Pindarics down,

Or plaintive elegies to lull the town.’—

‘ You take me wrong : I only meant to say,

That every book that’s new will have its day :

The best no more : for books are seldom read :

The world’s grown dull, and publishing a trade.

Were this not so, could Ossian’s deathless strains,

Of high heroic times the sole remains,

Strains which display perfections to our view,

Which polish’d Greece and Italy ne’er knew,

With modern epics share one common lot,

This day applauded, and the next forgot?’—

‘ Enough of this ; to put the question plain.

Will men of sense and taste approve my strain ?

Will my old-fashion’d sense and comic ease

With better judges have a chance to please?’—

‘ The question’s plain, but hard to be resolved ;

One little less important can be solved :

The men of sense and taste, believe it true,
Will ne'er to living authors give their due.
They're candidates for fame in different ways;
One writes romances, and another plays,
A third prescribes you rules for writing well,
Yet bursts with envy if you should excel.
Through all fame's walks, the college and the court,
The field of combat and the field of sport;
The stage, the pulpit, senate-house, and bar,
Merit with merit lives at constant war.

' All who can judge affect not public fame;
Of those that do, the paths are not the same;
A grave historian hardly needs to fear
The rival glory of a sonneteer:
The deep philosopher, who turns mankind
Quite inside outwards, and dissects the mind,
Would look but whimsical and strangely out,
To grudge some quack his treatise on the gout.'—

' Hold, hold, my friend, all this I know, and
An ancient bard¹ has told us long before; [more;
And, by examples easily decided,
That folks of the same trades are most divided.
But folks of different trades, that hunt for fame,
Are constant rivals, and their ends the same:
It needs no proof, you'll readily confess,
That merit envies merit, more or less:
The passion rules alike in those who share
Of public reputation, or despair.
Varrus has knowledge, humour, taste, and sense,
Could purchase laurels at a small expense;
But wise, and learn'd, and eloquent, in vain,
He sleeps at ease in pleasure's silken chain:

¹ Hesiod.

Will Varrus help you to the Muse's crown,
Which, but for indolence, might be his own?
Timon with art and industry aspires
To fame; the world applauds him, and admires:
Timon has sense, and will not blame a line
He knows is good, from envy or design:
Some general praise he'll carelessly express,
Which just amounts to none, and sometimes less:
But if his penetrating sense should spy
Such beauties as escape a vulgar eye,
So finely couch'd, their value to enhance, [chance;
That all are pleased, yet think they're pleased by
Rather than blab such secrets to the throng,
He'd lose a finger, or bite off his tongue.
Narcissus is a beau, but not an ass,
He likes your works, but most his lookingglass;
Will he to serve you quit his favourite care,
Turn a book-pedant, and offend the fair?
Clelia to taste and judgment may pretend
She will not blame your verse, nor dares commend!
A modest virgin always shuns dispute;
Soft Strephon likes you not, and she is mute.
Stern Aristarchus, who expects renown
From ancient merit raised, and new knock'd down,
For faults in every syllable will pry,
Whate'er he finds is good, he'll pass it by.'—

‘Hold, hold, enough! All act from private ends;
Authors and wits were ever slippery friends:
But say, will vulgar readers like my lays?
When such approve a work, they always praise.’—

‘To speak my sentiments, your tales I fear
Are but ill suited to a vulgar ear.
Will city readers, used to better sport,
The politics and scandals of a court

Well vouch'd from Grub Street, on your pages pore,
For what they ne'er can know, or knew before?
Many have thought, and I among the rest,
That fables are but useless things at best:
Plain words without a metaphor may serve
To tell us that the poor must work or starve.
We need no stories of a cock and bull
To prove that graceless scribblers must be dull;
That hope deceives; that never to excel
'Gainst spite and envy is the only spell.—
All this, without an emblem, I suppose
Might pass for sterling truth in verse or prose.'—

‘ Sir, take a seat, my answer will be long;
Yet weigh the reasons, and you'll find them strong.
At first², when savage men in quest of food,
Like lions, wolves, and tigers, ranged the wood,
They had but just what simple nature craves;
Their garments, skins of beasts; their houses,
caves.

When prey abounded, from its bleeding dam
Pity would spare a kidling or a lamb,
Which, with their children nursed and fed at home,
Soon grew domestic and forgot to roam:
From such beginnings flocks and herds were seen
To spread and thicken on the woodland green:
With property, injustice soon began,
And they that prey'd on beasts now prey'd on man.
Communities were framed, and laws to bind
In social intercourse the humankind.

² The author speaks of those only, who, upon the dispersion of mankind, fell into perfect barbarism, and emerged from it again in the way which he describes, and not of those who had laws and arts from the beginning by divine tradition.

These things were new, they had not got their names,

And right and wrong were yet uncommon themes :

The rustic senator, untaught to draw

Conclusion in morality or law,

Of every term of art and science bare,

Wanted plain words his sentence to declare ;

Much more at length to manage a dispute,

To clear, enforce, illustrate, and confute :

Fable was then found out ('tis worth your heeding),

And answer'd all the purposes of pleading.

It won the head with unsuspected art,

And touch'd the secret springs that move the heart :

With this premised ; I add, that men delight

To havé their first condition still in sight.

Long since the sires of Brunswick's line forsook

The hunter's bow, and dropp'd the shepherd's crook.

Yet, midst the charms of royalty, their race

Still loves the forest, and frequents the chase.

The highborn maid, whose gay apartments shine

With the rich produce of each Indian mine,

Sighs for the open fields, the pastoral book,

To sleep delightful near a warbling brook ;

And loves to read the ancient tales that tell

How queens themselves fetch'd water from the

If this is true, and all affect the ways [well.

Of patriarchal life in former days,

Fable must please the stupid, the refined ;

Wisdom's first dress to court the opening mind.'—

‘ You reason well, could nature hold her course,

Where vice exerts her tyranny by force :

Are natural pleasures suited to a taste,

Where nature's laws are alter'd and defaced ?

The healthful swain, who treads the dewy mead,
Enjoys the music warbled o'er his head:
Feels gladness at his heart while he inhales
The fragrance wafted in the balmy gales.
Not so Silenus from his night's debauch;
Fatigued and sick, he looks upon his watch
With rheumy eyes, and forehead aching sore,
And staggers home to bed to belch and snore;
For such a wretch in vain the morning glows,
For him in vain the vernal zephyr blows:
Gross pleasures are his taste, his life a chain
Of feverish joys, of lassitude and pain.
Trust not to nature in such times as these;
When all is off the hinge, can nature please?
Discard all useless scruples, be not nice;
Like some folks, laugh at virtue, flatter vice,
Boldly attack the mitre or the crown;
Religion shakes already, push it down:
Do every thing to please!—You shake your head.
Why then 'tis certain that you'll ne'er succeed:
Dismiss your Muse, and take your full repose;
What none will read 'tis useless to compose.'—

‘A good advice! to follow it is hard.—
Quote one example; name me but a bard
Who ever hoped Parnassus' heights to climb,
That dropp'd his Muse, till she deserted him.
A cold is caught, this medicine can expel,
The dose is thrice repeated, and you're well.
In man's whole frame there is no crack or flaw
But yields to Bath, to Bristol, or to Spa:
No drug poetic frenzy can restrain,
E'en hellebore itself is tried in vain:
'Tis quite incurable by human skill;
And though it does but little good or ill,

Yet still it meets the edge of reformation,
Like the chief vice and nuisance of the nation.
The formal quack, who kills his man each day,
Passes uncensured, and receives his pay.
Old Aulus, nodding midst the lawyers' strife,
Wakes to decide on property and life.
Yet not a soul will blame him, and insist
That he should judge to purpose, or desist.
At this address how would the courtiers laugh:—
“ My lord, you're always blundering: quit your
You've lost some reputation, and 'tis best [staff:
To shift before you grow a public jest.”
This none will think of, though 'tis more a crime
To mangle state affairs than murder rhyme.
The quack, you'll say, has reason for his killing,
He cannot eat, unless he earns his shilling.
The worn-out lawyer clammers to the bench
That he may live at ease, and keep his wench;
The courtier toils for something higher far,
And hopes for wealth, new titles, and a star;
While moon-struck poets in a wildgoose chase
Pursue contempt, and beggary, and disgrace.’

‘ Be't so: I claim by precedent and rule
A freeborn Briton's right, to play the fool:
My resolution's fix'd, my course I'll hold,
In spite of all your arguments, when told:
Whether I'm well and up, or keep my bed.
Am warm and full, or neither clothed nor fed;
Whether my fortune's kind, or in a pet
Am banish'd by the laws, or fled for debt;
Whether in Newgate, Bedlam, or the Mint,
I'll write as long as publishers will print.’—

‘ Unhappy lad, who will not spend your time
To better purpose than in useless rhyme;

Of but one remedy your case admits,
The king is gracious, and a friend to wits;
Pray write for him, nor think your labour lost,
Your verse may gain a pension or a post.'—

‘ May Heaven forbid that this auspicious reign
Should furnish matter for a poet’s strain;
The praise of conduct steady, wise, and good,
In prose is best express’d, and understood.
Nor are those sovereigns blessings to their age
Whose deeds are sung, whose actions grace the
stage.

A peaceful river, whose soft current feeds
The constant verdure of a thousand meads,
Whose shaded banks afford a safe retreat
From winter’s blasts and summer’s sultry heat,
From whose pure wave the thirsty peasant drains
Those tides of health that flow within his veins,
Passes unnoticed; while the torrent strong,
Which bears the shepherds and their flocks along,
Arm’d with the vengeance of the angry skies,
Is view’d with admiration and surprise;
Employs the painter’s hand, the poet’s quill,
And rises to renown by doing ill.
Verse form’d for falsehood makes ambition shine,
Dubs it immortal, and almost divine:
But qualities which fiction ne’er can raise
It always lessens when it strives to praise.’

‘ Then take your way, ’tis folly to contend
With those who know their faults, but will not
mend.’

THE
POEMS
OF
James Graeme.



THE
LIFE OF JAMES GRÆME.

BY
R. A. DAVENPORT, Esq.

JAMES GRÆME, who was born at Carnwath, in Lanarkshire, on the fifteenth of December, 1749, was the youngest child of a farmer of the middling class. In childhood, the delicate state of his health rendered him an object of incessant care to his parents, and, by a natural consequence, he became also the object of their fondest affection. ‘He very early (says his biographer, Dr. Anderson) discovered the most promising marks of lively talents and an active mind, and was much taken notice of for his inclination to letters, and his thirst for preeminence in the sports and pastimes adapted to his age.’

After having been taught to read by an old village schoolmistress, he was sent to the grammar school of Carnwath, the master of which was then Mr. Hugh Smith, a man not only of learning, but of an enlightened mind. Græme soon distinguished himself by the rapidity of his progress; he rose above all his competitors of the same standing; and, to the praise of his preceptor, it must be told, that he did not chain down the intellect of his pupil, by adhering to routine, and compelling him to wait the slow march of tardier scholars, but encouraged him to press forward in the acquisition of knowledge.

‘The uncommon proficiency which he made in the learning taught at the school of the village (says Dr. Anderson) soon obtained him the reputation of a boy of excellent parts; which, as it commonly happens,

prompted him to aspire above the vulgar occupations of the neighbourhood, and to despise every pursuit unconnected with the attainment of a polite and liberal education.

‘ Misplaced and dangerous as this kind of ambition might seem in a boy of his station, it occasioned no anxiety in his parents. Being accustomed, from his infancy, to regard the capacity of their son with partiality, and flattered with the credit he might do the family by his learning, they resolved to dispense with his services in the business of the farm, for which he promised to be unequal, and to educate him for the church.

‘ The want of patronage, and other obstacles equally obvious and intimidating, did not shake their resolution. Examples of success, in similar circumstances, were within the reach of their observation. These examples, while they provoked their competition, served also to justify their choice, the singularity of which, indeed, was much less remarkable than the temerity; the clerical profession being an object of common and moderate ambition in North Britain, where the parity of rank and slender emoluments of the clergy offer no temptation to the families of the rich; and the attainment of a liberal education is within the reach of persons of inferior rank.’

Promotion having been obtained by Mr. Smith, the care of the school devolved upon an assistant teacher, a man of insufficient abilities, and a narrow mind. Græme was, therefore, sent to a school at Liberton, to which place, two miles from his home, he walked every morning, bearing with him the provisions for the day. There he remained two years, an assiduous student, and likewise an eager and general reader.

At the age of fourteen, Græme was removed to the grammar school of Lanark, where he could have the advantage of being instructed by Mr. Robert Thomson, brother in law of the author of ‘ The Seasons’,

who is described, by Dr. Anderson, as being ‘a man whose eminent worth, uncommon knowledge in classical learning, indefatigable diligence, and strictness of discipline, without severity, placed him in the first rank among the instructors of youth in North Britain.’ With such a guide, and with an ardent desire to excel, it was natural that Græme should pursue his studies with flattering success. His Latin versions and prose compositions are said, for one so young, to have been of singular merit. It appears, however, that he was not equally happy in verse; the fragment of a Sapphic ode, the only specimen which has been preserved, being a complete failure.

In 1767 he was sent to the University of Edinburgh, whither he was accompanied by his friend Mr. now Dr. Anderson, who had been his companion at the schools of Liberton and Lanark, and to whose advice, encouragement, and example, it is probable that he was much indebted. At Edinburgh he remained three years, during which he strenuously exerted himself to outstrip his rivals in the race of learning.

‘His success (says his friend) was answerable to his assiduity. In classical learning, he surpassed the most industrious and accomplished student of his standing¹. He spoke and composed in Latin

¹ With an inexcusable carelessness, or want of candour Mr. Chalmers has confounded the period when the faulty Sapphic Ode was written, with that when Græme was studying at the University of Edinburgh. He seizes the opportunity, afforded by his own blunder, or misrepresentation, to sneer at Dr. Anderson, who, notwithstanding the honourable weakness of a friend has misled him on the subject of Græme, is as much superior in genius and critical acumen to Mr. Chalmers as the noonday splendour of the sun is superior to the smoky light of a torch. ‘It seems difficult (says Mr. Chalmers) to form any judgment of the illiteracy of those “most industrious and accomplished students of his standing,” whom he surpassed in “classical learning.”’ The

with a fluency and elegance that had few examples. He even exercised himself a little in Greek composition, which is not often done in the Scottish universities.

‘ The acuteness of his intellect enabled him to enter with facility into the abstrusest doctrines of abstract philosophy. Of mathematics, natural philosophy, and metaphysics, his knowledge was profound and masterly; particularly of the latter, to the study of which he received an early determination, from the prevalence of speculative theology among the lower ranks in North Britain.

‘ He studied the works of Aristotle, Descartes, Mallebranche, Locke, Leibnitz, Berkeley, Baxter, Hume, Hartley, Reid, &c. with great accuracy, and exercised his ingenuity in writing little essays on Innate Ideas, the Immateriality of the Soul, &c. which showed extensive knowledge of pneumatology, of logic, and of philosophy in general.

‘ In endeavouring to qualify himself for deciding questions, which all pretend to dispute about, he often indulged his propensity to metaphysical refinement, in maintaining false principles, which, though apparently trifling, from the consequences they implied, and the mode of reasoning they authorized, subjected him, among the unlearned, to the imputation of freethinking.

‘ But this habit of disquisition was not accompanied with a disputations humour in conversation. Dispute he hated, and carefully avoided. He knew that it tends to contract and pervert the understanding, deprave the taste, extinguish the love of truth

Sapphic ode was written in 1764; Græme did not go to Edinburgh till 1767, where he stayed till 1769; and Mr. Chalmers will hardly venture to assert that, in the course of five years, it was impossible for Græme to have acquired that purity and elegance of style in which he was originally deficient.—This is not the only error of fact which Mr. Chalmers has committed in his short life of Græme.

and of delicacy, and render the heart insensible to the pleasures of rational converse.'

The study of metaphysics did not, however, long remain his favourite. It was supplanted by the more attractive and more useful study of ethics, politics, history, poetry, and criticism. His passion for reading was omnivorous and insatiable; and it may, therefore, be believed, that his pecuniary inability to procure all the books for which he wished was the circumstance which he bore with less patience than he bore any other. For a considerable time, he had devoted the moments of his leisure to the composition of verse, and his Muse was now more frequently invoked, to sing the charms, or wake the pity, of a lady who had gained his affection, and whom he has celebrated under the names of Eliza and Mira. He is said to have seldom revised his pieces; they dropped from his pen in the morning, pleased him for a moment, and were forgotten at night. Yet, he thought sufficiently well of their merit to resolve that a selection of them should be submitted to the public.

By the kindness of Mr. Lockhart, a near relation of the landlord of his father, Græme was, about the latter end of 1779, presented to an exhibition, or, as it is called in Scotland, a bursary, in the University of St. Andrew. But this, we are told, 'he found reason soon after to decline, on discovering that it subjected him to repeat a course of languages and philosophy, which the extent of his acquisitions, and the ardour of his ambition, taught him to hold in no great estimation.' From this exhibition, therefore, he derived no other benefit than the pleasure of seeing St. Andrew's, and of contracting an acquaintance with Wilkie, the author of 'The Epigoniad.'

Resuming, in 1770, his studies at Edinburgh, he was admitted into the theological class, after having completed the usual preparatory course; but his declining health prevented him from performing any of

the exercises which are usually prescribed to students in that class. The vacation he spent at his native village, where he passed a part of his time in examining the arguments of the deistical writers, and in making himself master of the knowledge which is to be gained from the works of Biblical critics and polemical divines. The result of his inquiries was a thorough conviction of the truth of Christianity. 'Of modern divines his greatest favourites were Clarke and Jortin. Of the contracted principles and unamiable prejudices of sectaries, he had no conception. The words Presbyterian and Episcopalian, Lutheran and Calvinist, he well understood, but set no value on them. The title of a Christian he thought infinitely more honourable.'

The time was now come when Græme was to enter into the world, and endeavour to turn to advantage his talents and learning. In the summer of 1771, he was recommended to Major White, of Milton, near Lanark, as a tutor to the sons of that gentleman. He was not long in this situation before he acquired the affection of his pupils, and the friendship of his employer. He was treated as one of the family, and he became acquainted with many of the gentlemen of the neighbourhood. Yet there were moments when dependence, lightly as it weighed upon him, seemed an insufferable burthen, and his mind, sinking under it, gave way to sadness. But his fears and his complaints were confined to his confidential correspondence with Dr. Anderson; while to those about him he preserved an even temper and a cheerful countenance.

It is probable that latent disease was the prompter of his gloomy thoughts, and that, though it could not sour his temper, it depressed his spirits. A very short time elapsed before it manifested itself openly, and in one of its most formidable aspects. He was seized with a fever and cough; and so rapidly did the malady gain ground that, by the middle of Sep-

tember, it was declared to be a confirmed consumption. He was, for a while, nursed with the most humane attention by the family in which he resided; but, finding that he still grew worse, he resolved to return to his native home, that he might at least have the consolation of resigning his last breath in the arms of his parents. To the whispers of Hope he never listened for a moment, but prepared for death with a fortitude and cheerfulness which even innocence and piety do not always inspire. The bodily sufferings to which he was exposed, and the inconveniences arising from his humble circumstances, he bore with an un murmuring patience. The bed of sickness was, in some degree, smoothed by the visits and kindnesses of Mr. White, and other friends, among whom was Dr. Anderson, who almost constantly sat by him, during the three months which preceded his death. At length, after having lingered for ten months, 'his playful wit and humour never forsaking him till he was no longer able to smile, or even to speak,' he expired, without a groan, on the twenty-sixth of July, 1772.

The poems of Græme were first inserted among the works of the established British Poets by Dr. Anderson, whose judgment, on this occasion, seems to have been led astray by his amiable partiality for the friend of his early years. The warm and affectionate feelings of his heart rendered him blind to defects which, though he is one of the most candid and indulgent of critics, he would, under other circumstances, not have failed to perceive. It is difficult to discover any claim which Græme possesses to the distinguished station which he occupies. It may truly be said of him, that he did not achieve his greatness, but that it was thrust upon him. Some writers atone by energy and novelty of thought, for their lack of elegance; while others, though they fail in loftiness and originality, gain pardon by the splendour and grace of their diction, and the melody

of their verse. But to neither of these classes does Græme belong. He does not astonish by any display of creative power; he does not charm by any nice felicity of expression. On the contrary, his ideas are, in general, the common places of poetry, his metre is often unmusical, his epithets are frequently ill chosen, his language in many instances is careless and mean, and his rhymes are inexcusably imperfect. Correctness he would, probably, in time have acquired; and he might then have ranked in the class of pleasing versifiers; but I do not perceive in his writings anything to justify a belief that he would ever have attained to distinction as a poet. It must, nevertheless, be owned that a few of his poems rise rather above the level of the rest, and may be read with pleasure. Among these may, perhaps, be numbered 'The Student,' 'The Night Piece,' and 'Fit of the Spleen,' the first of which seems to prove that he was not without abilities for ludicrous composition, while the latter two, and especially 'The Fit of the Spleen,' now and then remind us of the turn of thought and the peculiar style of his countryman, the author of 'The Grave.'

But, though the honours of a poet must reluctantly be denied to Græme, his early death was a loss both to society and letters. Amiable in his manners, benevolent in his disposition, unaffectedly pious, and unstained with bigotry, it is probable that, as a man and a pastor, his precepts and his example would have produced the most beneficial influence on those committed to his care; while, as a scholar, there can be little doubt that his native talent, his extensive knowledge, his quickness of intellect, his untirable perseverance, and his ardent desire to distinguish himself, would finally have raised him to literary eminence. To have lived so innocently, to have laboured so earnestly in the hope of honest fame, and to have died so firmly, affords no slight proof of a pure and powerful mind.

ELEGY.

WRITTEN IN SPRING.

THE tuneful lark awakes the purple morn,
Returning plovers glad the dreary waste;
The trees no more their ravish'd honours mourn,
No longer bend below the wintry blast.

The Spring o'er all her genial influence sheds,
Her smelly fragrance scents the balmy breeze:
Her opening blossoms purple o'er the meads,
Her vivid verdure veils the robbed trees.

The airy cliff resounds the shepherd's lay,
Within its banks the murmuring streamlet flows;
Around their dams the sportive lambkins play,
And from the stall the vacant heifer lows.

The voice of music warbles from the wood,
Delightful objects crowd the smiling scene;
All nature shares the universal good,
And cold despair exalts no breast but mine.

Dismal to me appears the bloomy vale,
The haunts of pleasure sadden at my tread;
Unheard, unnoted, vernal zephyrs sail
The flowery waste, and bend the quivering reed.

No more, enraptured with successful love,
I fit my numbers to the tuneful string;
No more portray the verdure of the grove.
Or hear the voice of incense-breathing Spring.

The torrents, whiten'd with descending rain,
The wave-worn windings of the wandering rill,
The flowery flush that liveries all the plain,
The blue-gray mist that hovers o'er the hill;

I sing no more :—but, ravish'd from the maid
Who kindly listen'd to my faithful sighs,
I, inly grieving, droop the pensive head,
And mourn the bliss relentless fate denies.

THE LINNET.

UNHAPPY and unblest'd the man,
Whom mercy never charm'd;
Whose heart, insensible and hard,
No pity ever warm'd.

Far from his dangerous abode,
Heaven! may my dwelling lie;
And from his unrelenting race
Ye little warblers fly.

Though thickening hawthorns blend their boughs,
And furze wide spread around,
Yet build not there your downy nests,
Nor trust the faithless ground.

Although his smiling fields produce
The most, the fittest food;
Beware, beware, nor thither bring
Your young, your tender brood.

Behold a sister linnet there,
Laid lifeless on the green !
Fled is the smoothness of her plumes,
And fled her sprightly mien.

The grass grows o'er her ruffled head,
And many a tapering rush ;
Though once a fairer, sweeter bird,
Did never grace a bush.

It was but yesterday she sat
Upon a thistle's top,
And eyed her family pecking round :
Their succour and their hope—

Each look, and every chirp betray'd
A mother's fond delight ;
To see them all so fully fledged,
And capable of flight.

Close in the middle of a bush,
With prickles thick beset,
She brought them forth ; no savage boy
The wily nest could get.

Full twenty days, with pious bill,
Their gaping mouths she fed ;
Till ripe, they left their hair-lined home,
Slow flitting as she led.

Joyful they flapp'd their new grown wings ;
But happy for them all,
Had they but kept their native bush,
Nor seen a mother fall !

Blithesome she sat, and sweetly sang,
Nor dream'd of danger near;
How could she, conscious of no ill?
The guilty only fear.

But, praised for villany, alas!
Not innocence can shun,
Nor all a linnet's music ward
The schoolboy's lawless stone.

Train'd by a rough unfeeling sire
To cruelty and pride,
An infant ruffian passing by
The harmless bird espied¹.

Conceal'd behind a hawthorn hedge,
He took his deadly aim;
Thick, thick the feathers floated round,
And fluttering down she came.

Full fast her fearful younglings fly
Into a neighbouring shade;
Where low they cower disconsolate,
And mourn a mother dead.

Pensive they sit, with hunger pined,
Nor dare desert the spray;
Nor know they how to gather food,
No mother leads the way.

¹ This stanza added by Dr. Anderson.

TO THE

MEMORY OF MR. JAMES FISHER ¹.

SOFT let me tread the hallow'd ground,
 A druid's buried near!
 And can I pass a druid's grave,
 Nor drop a friendly tear!

Short is the path, and broad the way,
 That leads unto the tomb;
 The flowers of youth but seldom bud,
 Or wither in their bloom.

The vernal breezes sweetly breathe,
 And all their beauties wake;
 When, lo! a storm descends, and they
 Are ravish'd from the stalk.

Full many a youth in flowery prime
 Indulges hope to-day,
 Who never sees to-morrow dawn,
 Death's unsuspected prey.

¹ A student of divinity in the University of Edinburgh, of distinguished abilities, and of agreeable manners, who was unfortunately drowned in the Clyde, between Lanark and Stonebyres, in 1769. He was the son of William Fisher, a respectable farmer in Covington. It is necessary to add, that the character of this pleasant, accomplished, and sensible young man, having been mistaken by some people, more prone to censure than acute to observe, the Presbytery of Bigger denied him his probation; and he was meditating a voyage to America. His body was thrown on the land about six weeks after the accident, and interred in the churchyard of Covington.

But while I weep, in mournful strains,
O'er youthful years laid low;
Still let me pause, nor dare blaspheme
The hand that gives the blow.

How many different ills conspire
To sour the cup of life!
What various passions vex the breast
With unabating strife!

The woes that harrow up the heart
Increase with every day;
Death is our only hope, and he
In mercy ends the fray.

Hail! highly favoured of Heaven,
Who safely on the shore,
Without concern, behold the wreck
That served to waft you o'er.

But chiefly, hail! lamented youth,
On whose green grave I lie;
While round me stalks thy pensive ghost
In sullen majesty.

No more shall malice wound thy fame,
Or envy's tale be spread;
For sacred is the silent grave,
And hallow'd are the dead.

No longer wilt thou, here and there,
A hapless wanderer roam;
Earth lends her mantle, and supplies
An unmolested home.

As, rescued from the bleaching wave,
Thy body turns to dust;
Remembrance oft will drop a tear,
And own thy fate unjust.

The traveller who passes by,
With weeping heart, will read
The mournful lay which marks thy tomb,
And sooth thy pensive shade.

Epitaph.

HERE lies, upon the lap of earth,
A youth unknown to fame,
Misfortune damp'd his lively parts,
And check'd his noble flame.

To malice, and to groundless hate,
A smile was all he gave;
And from regarding Heaven he gain'd,
In recompense, a grave.

The virtues that adorn'd his youth,
And mark'd his low estate,
Still, reader, keep before your eye,
And strive to imitate.

The frailties of unripen'd age
Consign to native earth;
Nor seek with sacrilegious hand
To draw these frailties forth.

So may his lamentable fate
Upon you never fall,
Nor death surprise you unawares,
Without a timely call.

ELEGY.

WRITTEN NEAR THE RUINS OF CUTHALEY CASTLE¹.

THE pale-eyed moon serenest the silent hour,
And many a star adorns the clear blue sky;
While pleased I view this desolated tower
That rears its time-struck tottering top so high.

Here was the garden, there the festive hall,
This the broad entry, that the crowded street;
The task how pleasant to repair its fall,
And every stone arrange in order meet!

The scheme is finish'd;—ages backward roll'd,
And all its former majesty restored:—
Imagination hastens to unfold
The pomp, the pleasures of its long lost lord.

The voice of music echoes through the dome,
The jocund revellers beat the bending floor;
In golden goblets generous liquors foam,
And mirth, loud laughing, wings the rapid hour.

As fancy brightens, other scenes are seen;
No privacy can scape her eagle eye;
She follows lovers to the midnight green,
And throws a glory round them as they lie.

But mark the change!—the music swells no more,
And all the dome another prospect wears;
Its master's blood distains the festive floor,
And mirth, loud laughing, saddens into tears.

¹ The ancient seat of Lord Somerville, near Carnwath,

O, how unlike that gentle swain, who press'd
His yielding mistress on the midnight green!
The lover now, in weeds of warriors dress'd,
Destruction threatening in his furious mien.
Unmoved, he sees him murder'd in his prime,
And wipes the blood red-reeking on his sword;
His savage mistress hails the horrid crime,
And spurns the carcass of her late loved lord.
But not unpunish'd is the guilty pair,
Imagination hurries on their end;
Behold the lifted falchion's deadly glare!
Now purple vengeance hastens to descend.
That stroke became thee!—pious was the deed:
So much a hapless brother's blood required;
In vain let youth, in vain let beauty plead:
They pled for him, but pled, alas! unheard.
Still, still unwearied restless fancy roams,
On swelling waves of wild vagary toss'd,
Calls sheeted spectres from the opening tombs,
And fills the tower with many a grisly ghost.
Pensive they stalk in melancholy state,
And to pale Cynthia bare their gaping wounds;
While many a heapy ruin's moss-clad height
In hollow murmurs all their woes resounds.
But whence that mournfully melodious song,
That voice of elegy so sadly slow,
The certain symptom of a mortal wrong;
The dismal utterance of an earthly woe?
Haply, some plaintive solitary wretch,
The threadbare mourner of a threadbare tale;
Who nightly does the lunar radiance watch,
And join the howlet in his weary wail:

Grieving he sees the ravages of time,
The fleeting nature of terrestrial things—
‘ In vain the stately palace towers sublime,
Low lie the labour’d monuments of kings.
‘ Where is the darling seat of sceptred pride,
Proud Babylon! with all her brazen gates?
No pensile gardens grace the dreary void;
There dens the dragon with his scaly mates.
‘ Where the magnificence of Grecian fanes!
No more the storied pyramids we see:
A heap of stones is all that now remains;
’Tis all they are, and all Versailles shall be!
‘ Where the famed structures of imperial Rome?
Cæsarean theatres to contain a world?
All, all are buried in one mighty tomb,
All in one gulf of desolation hurl’d!
Happy, if this should prove his only woe!
The death of theatres scarce could break my rest;
From other causes all my sorrows flow,
Far other troubles tear my bleeding breast.
From love, from love my nightly wandering
springs!
No slumber settles on my grief-worn eye;
Else not the ruin’d monuments of kings
Could tempt my steps below the midnight sky.

TO MIRA.

In the Manner of Ovid.

IN fruitful Clydesdale stands my native seat,
Mean, but not sordid, though not spacious, neat;
In Clydesdale, noted for its lovely dames,
And meadows water'd with irriguous streams;
For juicy apples, and for mellow pears,
Firm footed horses, and laborious steers.

In vain would Phœbus cleave the earth with
Or scorching Sirius desolation threat; [heat,
In vernal pride still smiles the varied scene,
The fields still flourish, and the grass is green;
Refreshing rills meander all around,
And flowery turfs still shade the fruitful ground.

But what are meads or racy fruits to me,
When far removed from happiness and thee?
Each charming prospect changes to a wild,
And desolation reigns in every field.
Mira is absent!—though I dwelt above,
The dismal thought would sadden every grove,
Would change the hue of each immortal flower,
And star-stuck arches would appear to lour.

But wert thou there, the windy Alps would
please,
Or Greenland, guarded with her glassy seas;
Thy presence would disarm the northern blast,
And melt the mountains of eternal frost.

How doubly pleasant, walking by thy side,
Were Medwan's meadows, and the banks of Clyde!
From blooming furze the linnet's matin lay,
Or lark's, swift borne on early winds away!

Come to my arms, my mistress and my wife!
Nor waste the morning of too short a life.
Where'er she comes, ye swelling hills, subside!
And verdant valleys smile on every side!

TO ELIZA.

FAIR is Eliza in her lover's eye;
No maiden on our plains is half so fair;
I gaze with rapture on your charms, but sigh
To think that others may that rapture share.

I can't endure the cringing, fawning race,
That bow around you wheresoe'er you go;
Contract your sphere, be cautious how you please:
The man that smiles upon you is my foe.

Away, the empty bustle of a crowd,
The languid starveling pleasures of a town;
But take, O, take us, some sequester'd wood,
To unknown bliss, or but to angels known.

I do not seek the glory of the vain,
Nor court I envy from the stolen glance;
Poor is the gift, and little does he gain,
Who leads a civil mistress in the dance.

Be mine the silent ecstasies of love,
Too nice for utterance, too refined for view;
I'm bless'd indeed! (thus far my wishes rove)
If only bless'd with solitude and you.

OCTOBER.

LATE does the sun begin his shorten'd race,
 Languid, although no cloud obscures the view ;
 The nipping hoar frost veils the shrivel'd grass,
 Where waved, erewhile, the cool refreshing dew.

Cold from the north his hooked atoms calls,
 And every field in firmer fetters binds ;
 Rustling in showers the wither'd foliage falls,
 Slow from the tree, the sport of eddy winds.

The birds, all flocking from their summer haunts,
 On the rough stubbles pick the costly grain ;
 His deadly snares the cruel fowler plants,
 And intercepts the wing that flaps in vain.

Hard is their fate—if we may call it hard,
 To shun the rigid winter's coming storms,
 When famine threatens in the farmer's yard,
 And drifted snow the desert field deforms.

The most familiar of all birds of song,
 Domestic redbreast, on the window sits ;
 While, seldom seen, though whirring all day long,
 The active wren from hedge to hedge still flits.

In signs like these, the ploughman wisely reads
 Approaching winter, and provides a wife ;
 The joyless season passes o'er their heads,
 Lost and unmark'd amid the sweets of life.

But wretched he, whom all the long dark night
 Fate on a lonely couch has doom'd to lie !
 Does Mira frown at what I trembling write ?—
 If Mira frown, that wretched swain am I.

CLARA TO DAMON.

AH, cruel change! from gentle to severe;
Change ever proves unfriendly to the fair:
Show me the man, the wondrous man, whose mind
Alters to kinder sentiments from kind;
No, there is no such man; or if there be,
Who would not wish the youth they love were he?
What maid would think she overdid her part,
To grasp the dear inconstant to her heart,
Discard each grim-eyed guardian of her charms,
And fold, and closer fold him in her arms!

'Tis vision all! the same severe decree
Has ruin'd womankind that ruins me;
Framed, delicately framed for social bliss,
We feel each finer passion in excess;
In love at length each female friendship ends;
We scarce distinguish lovers from our friends;
Nor have we learn'd, with philosophic pride,
From ours another's misery to divide.
But man is fashion'd in a rougher mould,
Insensible at best, and always cold;
His lumpish soul no generous wish inspires,
No pity melts, no heartfelt rapture fires;
Or, if for once it kindle into praise,
How soon the momentary flash decays!
Scarce have we time to hail the dawning light,
Ere the weak meteor vanishes in night;
With eager eyes we search around in vain,
And think to see it glimmering again!
Alas, how foolish! 'tis for ever gone,
With the delightful hour in which it shone!

Ah me! and must I never more prolong
The night, in listening to my Damon's song!

Alas! can love admit of no decrease,
 That too, too little! yet be render'd less?
 My happiness requires it should be so;
 It must, it shall! though worlds should answer, No.

Yes, Damon, yes, a very weak excuse
 Will screen the silence of your faithless Muse;
 Tell me on systematic plains you stray,
 'Borne on the wings of wisdom far away.'
 But wherefore thus disturb my quiet? why
 Regard your failings with too nice an eye?
 Though gross be the deceit, if you deceive,
 I pledge my maiden honour to believe.

E L E G Y.

To Mira.

THE cottage swains, how exquisitely bless'd
 With sunburnt virgins in the prime of years!
 A sigh obtains the fairest and the best;
 At most, the pleasing eloquence of tears.
 No stubborn honour parts the willing pair;
 No maiden barter happiness for fame;
 No prideful demon whispers in her ear,
 The long succession of a titled name.
 O; had a turf-built hamlet's humble roof,
 A shot-clad rafter caught your earliest view!
 Or, sternly rigid, fortune scowl'd aloof,
 Nor stamp'd with dignity a parent's brow.
 Or had I (love demands the lowly boon)
 Grown to maturity in splendour's ray!
 In folly's tinsel tatters tripp'd the town
 The pride of fops, and glitter of a day!

Had treasured gold improved my native worth,
Inglorious robb'd from Afric's ebon sons;
A ruin'd castle claim'd a father's birth,
Where jackdaws nestle, and the howlet moans!

But monied merit, and paternal fame,
The gods to poor Alexis never meant:
He lives unstoried; lost, alas! to him,
The herald's blazon, and the painter's tint.

A soul unsullied by the thirst of gain,
A bosom rising at another's woe,
He boasts no more;—his cottage bounds the plain,
Where wild woods thicken, and where waters
flow.

A mansion not unworthy of the fair:
Why blushes Mira at the simple tale?
Can all the pomp of dirty cities dare
Vie with the fragrance of the vernal vale?

But, nursed amid the formulas of pride,
You want the heart to own the man you love,
Walk with feign'd pleasure by the fopling's side,
And praise the nonsense which you disapprove.

The very vale you tread with willing feet,
You seem to scorn, and wantonly prefer
The dull rotation of a crowded street,
A shrill piped actress, and a dancing bear.

Farewell, dear maid, some happier youth possess
The blooming beauties ne'er design'd for me;
May fruitful Hymen yield him every bliss,
And every joy I, hapless! hoped in thee.

But, O, may none, invidious of your mirth,
Name lost Alexis on the bridal day!
For could you, Mira, though obscure his birth,
Unpitying hear, a lifeless corse he lay?

ELEGY.

NIGHT, raven wing'd, usurps her peaceful reign,
Sleep's lenient balsam stills the voice of woe;
A keener breeze breathes o'er the lowly plain,
And pebbly rills in deeper murmurs flow.

The paly moon through yonder dreary grove,
The screechowl's haunt, emits a feeble ray;
The plummy warblers quit the song of love,
And dangle, slumbering, on the dewy spray.

The mastiff, conscious of the lover's tread,
With wakeful yell the listening maid alarms,
Who, loosely robed, forsakes the downy bed,
And springs reserveless to his longing arms.

O, happy he! who with the maid he loves
Thus toys endearing on the twilight green,
While all is rapture, Cupid's self approves,
And Jove consenting veils the tender scene.

O, happy he! by gracious fate allow'd,
At dusky eve, to clasp the slender waist,
Press the soft lip, dissolve the silky shroud,
And feel the heavings of a lovesick breast.

Once more the bliss :— But now with plaintive care
I, lonely wandering, tune the voice of woe;
And, patient, brave the chilly midnight air,
Where wild woods thicken, and where waters
flow.

ELEGY.

THE moon shines silvery on the limpid stream,
Scarce blush the flowers, in fainter dyes array'd;
The howlets, rousing at the friendly beam,
With lazy pinions scour the dusky glade.

The time-struck turret, on yon mountain's brow,
Projecting wide, embrowns the lowly vale;
The spiry column lessens to the view,
And bluish clouds the scatter'd huts conceal.

The younglings, ravish'd from the fleece-clad
ewes,
Wake plaintive bleatings from the turf-built fold;
The moon-scared heifer hollow-murmuring lows,
And drony beetles noisy wings unfold.

The lapwing, clamorous, seeks her varied race,
Along the heath she shoots on sounding wing;
From where yon firs their shaggy sharp tops raise,
The widow'd turtles doleful dirges sing.

It was, Eliza! in a night like this,
As calm the air, as clear the conscious moon,
The midnight mourner sung our mutual bliss,
And rivers lull'd us as they slowly run.

When you around me threw your velvet arms,
Moist roll'd your eye, wild heaved your snowy
breast,
And gentle spoke, while redden'd all your charms,
Words well remember'd, for you spoke and
kiss'd.

‘ Before Alexis cease, in love’s bright garb,
To be Eliza’s dearest, chief delight,
Shall cease yon twinkling stars—that glorious orb,
With silvery radiance to adorn the night.’

But what avail, Eliza, all thy vows,
The soft endearments of thy faithless tongue,
Since for another all thy beauty blows,
Heaves thy fair breast, and warbles forth thy
song?

The captive fetter'd with the galling chain,
Immured in dungeons, and remote from day,
Should bright-eyed hope her cheering influence
deign,
The slug-furr'd concave echoes to his joy.

But hope no more illumes the future hour,
Despair invests it with her dismal shade;
Soon lay me low shall death’s tremendous power,
In long oblivion of the bridal bed.

I need no poison blended with the bowl,
No wound red streaming from the pointed steel,
Grief chills the living vigour of my soul,
And round my heart death’s leaden hand I feel.

ABSENCE.

FLED are the blossoms of each tree,
And blasted every bough ;
Silent and gloomy is the grove,
And solitary now.

In vain I seek each favourite spot
That gave delight before ;
Dismal each favourite spot appears,
And gives delight no more.

A prospect comfortless and sad,
Long lengthens all around ;
And every passing streamlet gives
A melancholy sound.

If on the azure of the east
I fix my wandering eye,
Love, grief, and Mira fill my soul ;
I rave, I mourn, I cry.

And can I look to where the sun
Directs his evening ray,
Nor call to mind a hapless friend¹,
Who lingers life away ?

Yes, yes, I yield, unhappy youth !
Whene'er I think of thee ;
I yield the dearly purchased prize,
Superior misery.

¹ Dr. Anderson, the author's familiar friend, was then at Monkland Well, near Glasgow, for the recovery of his health.

But though unequal in the strife,
I some distinction claim ;
Ills, and misfortunes not a few,
Adorn my growing name.

Fate's iron pencil has engraved,
On either pensive brow,
Some leading features of distress,
Some well touch'd tints of woe.

Alike black envy's blasting fang
And rooted spite we prove ;
Alike we shed the secret tear
Of disappointed love.

Alike, deceitful hope usurps
Our unsuspecting breast ;
An artful minister of woe,
Ingenious to molest.

An endless crowd of ills, a sad
Variety of pain,
Cross issues, and tormenting fears,
Compose her dreadful train.—

Thrice happy they who gain from Heaven
A calm unruffled life,
Of tearless sorrow, silent woe,
Uninterrupted grief!

Abstracted from this busy scene,
Agreed with all around,
They steal from life, unfelt the pain,
Incurable the wound.

Such be the tenor of my days,
And such my latter end ;
And such (he asks no more) may Heaven
Bestow upon my friend !

ON

COMING TO THE COUNTRY.

HAIL, dear companions of my youthful days!
Frequented hills and natal valleys, hail!
Peace, rest around!—while I incessant raise
My plaintive voice, and woes unwearied wail.

Peace, rest around!—the only boon I crave,
Is, undisturb'd, by yonder stream to stray;
The muse unnoted in the cool of eve,
Unnoted court the dawning of the day.

Why would you ask a melancholy man,
To number ills the' unhappy only prove?
The dismal tale would turn the wanton wan,
Infectious sorrow seize the group of love.

No, in my bosom let them ever rest;
A bosom that rejoices in the smart:
I grasp the dear destroyer to my breast,
And feed the passion which must break my heart.

Yes, Mira! yes, I hug thy faithless form:
See happy days—days never meant for me!
Yet still I feel the rising, raging storm,
'Tis transport, joy, and death, to think on thee!

Death! let thy deep-dyed purple garment flow,
The bloody dagger threaten in thy hand;
I fear thee not, array'd in weeds of woe;
Of woe, awaked by Mira's own command.

ON THE

LOSS OF THE AURORA,

WITH THE INDIAN SUPERVISORS, 1769.

ARE there who, lost to all their country's charms,
 To friends, companions, and their native home,
 Who burst, unfeeling, from a parent's arms,
 And, mad for gold, in foreign regions roam?

Mean is their aim, if gold alone allures;
 If glory fires not, nor their country's love:
 On such the Indian nightly curses pours,
 And calls red vengeance from the courts above.

Alas! how many, lost to honest fame,
 On Guinea's coast have courted black disgrace;
 Have render'd infamous a Briton's name,
 By lording lawless o'er a feeble race!

How many, e'en on India's furthest shore,
 Have robb'd the helpless native of his own!—
 Not such the generous band Aurora bore
 To honest industry and fair renown!

Each breast beat faithful in its country's cause,
 Each heart was warm with love of humankind;
 Keen to establish equitable laws,
 They chode the failing breeze and lagging wind.

Not always in the bark where virtue sails,
 Does smooth brow'd safety at the helm preside;
 Not always is she fann'd with prosperous gales,
 Since death's dark waves oft dash against her
 side.

Since oft on rocks, to charts and maps unknown,
 The hapless vessel suffers sudden wreck :
 Nor is it virtue that can save alone,
 When all around the watery pillars break.

Were virtue powerful o'er the stormy deep,
 Aurora on its bosom ne'er had lain ;
 Nor mothers taught their infant babes to weep
 For fathers tossing on the watery main¹.

ELEGY.

BENEATH this mossy oak's embowering shade,
 Where Clyde majestic rolls his lengthen'd stream,
 I've found a seat for tender sorrow made,
 On which the sun ne'er shed one genial gleam.

Hail, gentle genius of this mournful bower !
 Who mingles tears with every plaintive guest ;
 Say, did you ever, by your friendly power,
 Serene the passions of so sad a breast ?

Say, skill'd in woes which ancient lovers bare,
 Lovers to black oblivion long consign'd ;
 Can all their complicated ills compare
 With my unmingled misery of mind ?

When future lovers shall lament their fate,
 Beneath the shadow of this aged tree,
 The dismal story of my woes relate,
 They'll cease to sorrow when they think of me.

¹ In December, 1769, the ship arrived at the Cape of Good Hope, from whence it sailed soon after, but was never heard of afterwards. It is generally supposed to have taken fire, and that all the crew perished.

Tell them, Eliza was my earliest love;
Tell, how my humble passion she repay'd;
When lawless ruffians rush'd into the grove,
And forced to distant climes the hapless maid.
Then onward lead them to yon hillock's height,
Whose grass long-rankling drinks the sullen
wave,
And, weeping, bid the verdant turf lie light,
And plant the watery willow round my grave.
So may they all escape my timeless end,
And never, never my misfortunes feel;
Ne'er lose a mistress—ne'er lament a friend—
Nor bare their bosoms to the fatal steel.

ELEGY.

FAREWELL, companions of my secret sighs,
Love-haunted streams, and vales besprent with
Pensive, I see the ridgy hills arise, [dew!
Which must for ever hide you from my view.
A fleeting shadow was my promised peace,
The baseless fabric of a dream, my rest;
I laid me down in confidence of ease,
And meedless sorrow burst my bleeding breast.
See, yonder fleets the visionary scheme,
The fond illusion of a simple mind—
The sweets of love—the solitary stream,
The fragrant meadow, and the whispering wind.
Say, my Eliza, was it fancied bliss
You used to picture by yon falling rill?
O, say, where is it?—must it end in this?
O, still deceive, and I'll believe you still!

Say, fortune yet has happier days in store ;
Days big with transport, and with raptures new ;
O ! say I'm yours ; I ask, I hope no more ;
But only say so, and I'll think it true.

But whither wanders my distemper'd brain,
On seas of fancy and vagary toss'd ?
Before me lies a bleak extended plain,
And love and rapture are for ever lost.

TO MIRA.

KNEELING before the Majesty of Heaven,
For gilded roofs my prayer never rose ;
I ask'd no fertile field's delicious fruit,
Nor bent a wish to all a Florio ploughs.

With thee to share the calmer joys of life,
On thy soft bosom wear my age away ;
And timely tottering on the verge of fate,
Look back with pleasure on each well spent day ;

I ask'd no more :—Of what avail to me
The transient honours of a fleeting hour ;
The cumbrous trappings of a large estate,
The painted hanging, and the marble floor ?

Can riches blunt the dreadful dart of pain ;
Or check misfortune in her mid career ?
Dispel the terrors of approaching fate ;
Or snatch their owner from the mournful bier ?

Let want expose me to the world's contempt,
And poverty in all her rags invest ;
Return—and let the foolish world despise ;
Return—in spite of poverty I'm bless'd.

If Heaven, averse, reject my earnest prayer,
And fortune fix me in these distant plains;
Cease, cease, dread sisters! your ungrateful toil,
And burn the luckless thread that yet remains.

ELEGY.

WHILE sad I stray in solitary grief,
Where wild woods thicken, and where waters
flow;
No hope prophetic ministers relief,
Nor thought presaging mitigates my woe.

The dismal prospect thickening ills deform,
Black, and more black, each coming day appears;
Removed from shelter, I expect the storm,
And wait the period of deceitful years.

Soon may it come: and, O, may Mira soon
Forget the pleasures she has left behind;
All that at first her virgin graces won,
And all that since engaged her youthful mind.

What is Alexis? what his boasted love,
The banks of Medwan, and the vales around?
But a fair blossom in the dreamer's grove,
That sudden sinks, and never more is found.

Yes, yes, dear maid! the happiness of youth
Is but the revery of a real dream;
We catch delusions in the guise of truth;
A lover's raptures are not what they seem.

But yet a little, and the eye of age
Dissolves the phantoms to their native air;
A new creation opens on the sage,
Another passion, and another fair.

Forgive my weakness, for 'tis surely weak
To teach and yet despise the prudent part;
I feel, alas! I feel it as I speak:
This is a language foreign to my heart.

Her rigid lecture Reason reads in vain, '
Cold are her precepts, and her comforts cold;
I would not barter poverty and pain
For Clodio's wisdom, or for Florio's gold.

One only boon is all I ask of thee;
When in the mansion of the peaceful placed,
O, do not shed one precious tear for me,
But let my sorrows in oblivion rest!

As in the bosom of unwater'd wilds
A lowly lily languishes unseen,
And soon to drought, unknown, unnoted yields,
Leaving no traces that it once had been.

ELEGY.

YE dreams of bliss, and flattering hopes, that
wont
With momentary joy to ease my care,
Where are ye now? and what is your amount?
Vexation, disappointment, and despair.

Well pleased, I saw your airy bubbles blown,
Seemingly fair, and deck'd with many a ray:
But, lo! the tempest rose, and they were gone,
Broke and evanish'd in a single day.

Peace, base born wishes, sprung from selfish pride!
Will Fate reverse her positive decree?
Yon hill divides us, and will still divide,
Nor bend its lordly brow to pleasure me.

Yes, far beyond yon hill's aspiring height,
Which, to the orient, bounds our utmost view,
Where other streams reflect the morning light,
And other mountains are array'd in blue;

Mira now listens to the midnight knell,
By little rills that mimic Medwan's flow;
And bids, sublimely sad, the spinet swell
The solemn notes of sympathetic woe.

Enough, dear maid! to constancy and love;
To tender parents surely something's due;
Let others taste the joys I cannot prove,
The happy man whom fortune means for you.

O! bring not down, with unavailing tears,
Their hoary heads with sorrow to the grave;
Let not thy grief afflict the full of years,
But grant the grandson whom they justly crave.

One thought is all I ask: if marriage vows
And jealous Hymen shall admit of one;—
One only thought—in memory of my woes,
One thought—in pity of a wretch undone!

TO MIRA.

IF you in fancy's ever blooming scenes,
Contemplative of future grandeur, rove,
Delighted gaze on Florio's wide demesnes,
And blush to recollect an humbler love!

'Twere rude, dear maid! to break the golden
To sweep the gaudy equipage away; [dream,
Sully the massy platter's silver gleam,
Or grind the china to its native clay.

Be far from me the' invidious, cruel task,
To point the flaws which fancy's colours hide!
Too soon experience will remove the mask,
And show the nakedness of pompous pride.

But if you cherish in your faithful breast
The pleasing memory of former days,
Kindly recall each sacred promise past,
And only fate our happiness delays;

My willing muse shall speed the tedious hour,
And cheer your solitude with pious care;
At noon attend you in the woodland bower,
And add fresh fragrance to the evening air.

Still true to virtue, let us shun the bait
That from her paths would tempt our steps
Still for a favourable issue wait, [astray;
And through each difficulty edge our way.

Misfortune's waves may overwhelm a while,
 But buoyant virtue will emerge at last;
 The time advances that rewards our toil,
 And blots from memory the sorrows past.

TO ROBERT ANDERSON, M. D.

WHILE some, in all the luxury of health,
 The pride of pleasure, and the pomp of wealth,
 Inglorious, roused at passion's frantic call,
 Soak o'er the bowl, or madden at the ball;
 Triumph illiberal o'er the simple maid,
 By love or promise, to their arms betray'd;
 Some painted trifle with anxiety chase,
 Or wallow fulsome in the lewd embrace;
 By foul debauch and worthless feats secure
 Remorse vindictive in the sober hour;
 The grave associate of the good and sage,
 Or nerved with youth, or silver'd o'er with age;
 Through giddy life you urge your steady way,
 While conscience cheers the night and glads the
 In vain assail the vanities of youth, [day;
 You mark their progress, and you check their
 growth,
 From learning all its formal pride remove,
 Guard cheating friendship, fetter stubborn love.
 O! could I thus the' impetuous passions crush,
 Stifle the sigh, and curb the secret wish;
 By reason's sway this love of self control,
 This blaze of youth, and impotence of soul;
 Repress the frothy insolence of fame,
 The sigh that heaves for an immortal name;

I would not, restless, midnight vigils keep,
 Nor from my pillow drive encroaching sleep;
 To the tenth stanza elegies prolong,
 Nor clothe my woe in all the pomp of song;
 With joyless step an airy prize pursue,
 Which mocks my grasp, yet glitters in my view;
 Admire a virgin whom I see no more,
 Hills rise between us, and deep waters roar,
 And, worse than streams and mountains, still di-
 The daughter's piety, and the father's pride. [vide,

A NIGHTPIECE.

To speed the luckless moments, heavy wing'd,
 And from the drowsy monarch glorious steal,
 And dark oblivion drear, the silent hour,
 To meditation sacred and the muse;
 In grave abstraction from the noise of life,
 Thus let me frequent brush the dewy brake,
 And, lonely, devious, urge the darksome step
 Where, rising gradual, towers the shrubby hill.

Now, Night's vicegerent, Silence, awful power!
 In sage solemnity, and pomp august,
 Brooding, retired amid immantling glooms
 Horrific, holds her solitary reign,
 While yielding Nature owns her potent sway.

The scold's loud 'larum, and the dinsome mirth
 Of lawless revellers, plague not the ear:
 And rock-born echo, daughter of the hill,
 The dupe of empty clangor, answers not
 The ox's bellow or the horse's neigh.

Not one rebellious murmur wide around
 Affects the sense; save from an aged fane

(Whose rocky ruins, honour'd in decay,
Rise venerable, furr'd with drawling slugs),
Her lone retreat, the melancholic bird
Portentous and obscene, the hooting owl
Of formal phiz, in grave discordance hails
The full orb'd moon, who now from orient climes
Drives slowly on, in majesty sedate,
Her silver wain ; with noiseless flight they cleave
The blue expanse, her coursers eagle-wing'd.
Shook from night's sable skirt, the blue gray cloud
Rests on the hill, slow creeping to the vale.

Athwart the vault ethereal, airy borne,
The streamy vapours, carved to giant forms
By rural fancy, playful, wheel convolved,
Portending hunger, pestilence, and death :
So dreams the gloomy peasant, labour-worn,
Who, from the turf closed window's scanty round,
With grave regard the novel wonder views,
And, ruminating sad, bewails the times.

The red blue meteor, daughter of the marsh,
In dance irregular sweeps the rushy vale,
While Hell's grim monarch (so the vulgar deem)
Rides in the glimmering blaze, with purpose drear,
And murderous intent, and frequent drowns
The heedless wanderer in the swardy gulf.

Now light-heel'd fairies ply the circular dance,
With sportive elves, upon the midnight green ;
While screaming hideous, from the dismal bourne
Of desolated castles, goblins pale,
Bloody and gaunt, the progeny abhorr'd
Of superstition, hell-engender'd power,
By cunning monks conjured from lowest Styx,
Affright the maudlin rustic!—Now solemn,
To fancy's morbid eye, the sullen ghost

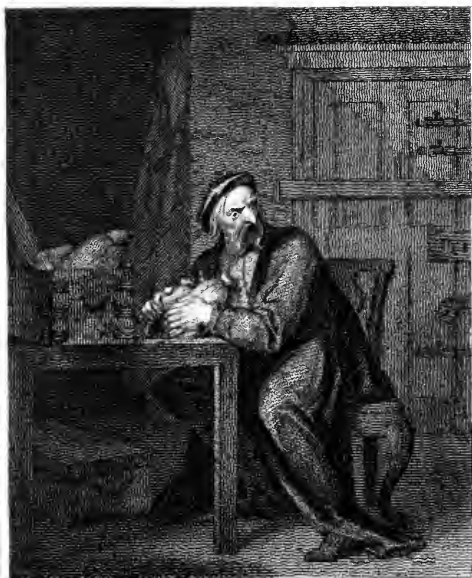
In sheeted grandeur through the churchyard stalks
Horrendous, muttering to the sickening moon ;
Until the bird of Mars with noisy clap,
Arousive of the dawn, shall crow aloud.

Now scandal's votaries, of flippant tongue
And haggard look, low-bending o'er a fire,
Almost extinct, beneath a cloud obscene,
Tobacco form'd, sit planning future lies.

With bolts and double doors in vain secured,
Gray headed avarice on the elbow raised,
Distrustful listens to the plaintive breeze
That howls without, while to his jealous ear
A dire diyan of hellish ruffians cursed
Debate the future breach : mad at the thought,
With palsied arms, new strung from fear, he grasps
His money bags, and swears they shall not have
them.

Now in his reverend study, cobweb lined,
Beside a paly lamp, with bitten nails,
The meagre student o'er a folio sits,
Of sagest bulk, in meditation deep :
Weak nature oft invites to sweet repose,
And bids restore the labour'd volume huge
To worms innate ; but o'er his fancy come
The patron's money'd aunt, his future spouse,
The glebe, the solemn sables, cravat starch,
And urge some pages more ; till rushing prone
The classic cruise, in hapless station placed,
In fragments scatter'd lies, and victor sleep
His triumph trumpets from the vocal nose.

Now, by the willow'd brink of wandering
streams,
The woe-worn lover walks with varied pace,
Muttering his wayward fancies to the wind,
Obtesting Heaven, and cursing every star



GRAMIE

With palsied arms, new-strung from fear, he grasps
His money-bags, and swears they shall not leave em

Alfred Russ



That pour'd malicious on his hopeful flame :
Or in a moss-lined cave below an oak
Of ancient growth, he plans the song of woe,
The word weigh'd elegy of liquid lapse,
And cadence glib : or, wearied to repose,
His sigh-shook frame lies blissfully entranced
(For so he dreams) in fair Cleone's arms.

THE STUDENT.

REMOTE from schools, from colleges remote,
In a poor hamlet's meanest, homeliest cot,
My earliest years were spent, obscurely low ;
Little I knew, nor much desired to know ;
My highest wishes never mounted higher
Than the attainments of an aged sire,
Proverbial wisdom, competence of wealth,
Earn'd with hard labour, and enjoy'd with health ;
Bless'd, had I still these blessings known to prize !
More rich I sure had been ; perhaps more wise.

One luckless day, returning from the field,
Two swains (the wisest of the village held),
Talking of books and learning, I o'erheard,
Of learned men, and learned men's reward :
How some rich wives, and some rich livings got,
Sprung from the tenants of a turf-built cot :
Then both concluded, though it ruin'd health,
Increase of learning was increase of wealth.

Fired with the prospect, I embraced the hint,
A grammar borrow'd, and to work I went ;
The scope and tenor of each rule I kept,
No accent miss'd me, and no gender scaped ;
I read whate'er commenting Dutchmen wrote,
Turn'd o'er Stobæus, and could Suidas quote ;

In letter'd Gellius traced the bearded sage,
Through all the windings of a wise adage:
Was the spectator of each honest scar,
Each sophist carried from each wordy war;
Undaunted was my heart, nor could appal
The mustiest volume of the mustiest stall;
Where'er I turn'd, the giant spiders fled,
And trembling moths retreated as I read.
Through Greece and Rome I then observant
 stray'd,
Their manners noted, and their states survey'd;
Attended heroes to the bloody fields,
Their helmets polish'd, and emboss'd their shields;
With duteous hand the decent matron dress'd,
And wrapp'd the stripling in his manly vest;
Nor stopp'd I there; but mingled with the boys,
Their rattles rattled, and improved their toys;
Lash'd conic *turbos* as in gyres they flew,
Bestrode their hobbies, and their whistles blew:
But still when this, and more than this was done,
My coat was ragged, and my hat was brown.

Then thus I communed with myself—' Shall I
Let all this learning in oblivion die;
Live in the haunts of ignorance, content
With vest unbutton'd, and with breeches rent?
None knows my merit here; if any knew,
A scholar's worth would meet a scholar's due.
What then? The college! ay, 'tis there I'll shine,
I'll study morals, or I'll turn divine;
Struck with my letter'd fame, without a doubt,
Some modern Lælius will find me out:
Superior parts can never long be hid,
And he who wants deserves not to be fed.'

Transported with the thoughts of this and that, .
I stitch'd my garments, and I dyed my hat;

To college went, and found, with much ado,
 That roses were not red, nor violets blue;
 That all I've learn'd, or all I yet may learn,
 Can't help me truth from falsehood to discern.

* * * * *

All mere confusion, altogether hurl'd,
 One dreary waste, one vast ideal world!
 Where uproar rules, and do you what you will,
 Uproar has ruled it, and will rule it still.
 Victorious *ergo*, daring consequence,
 Will ever be a match for common sense!
 To lordly Reason every thing must bow,
 The hero Liberty, and Conscience too;
 The first is fetter'd in a fatal chain,
 The latter, gagg'd, attempts to speak in vain.

Locke! Mallebranche! Hume! abstractions
 thrice abstract!

In reason give me what in sense I lack'd.
 I feel my poverty, and, in my eye,
 My hat, though dyed, has but a dusky dye.
 'Mistrust your feelings, reason bids you do.'—
 But, gentlemen, indeed I cannot now;
 For after all your *ergos*, look you there!
 My hat is greasy, and my coat is bare.

Hail, moral truth! I'm here at least secure,
 You'll give me comfort, though you keep me poor.
 But say you so? in troth 'tis something hard,
 Virtue does surely merit a reward.

'Reward! O, servile, selfish; ask a hire!
 Raiment and food this body does require:
 A prince for nothing may philosophise,
 A student can't afford to be so wise.

Sometimes the Stoa's gloomy walks I tried,
 Wrinkled my forehead, and enlarged my stride,

Despised e'en hunger, poverty, and pain,
Searching my pockets for a crust in vain.
Sometimes in Academus' verdant shade
With step more graceful I exulting stray'd,
Saw health and fortune join'd with happiness,
And virtue smiling in her social dress;
On me she did not smile, but rather lour;
I still was wretched, for I still was poor.

Sworn to no master, sometimes I would dwell
With Shaftesbury, sometimes with Mandeville;
Would call at every system on my way,
And now with Leibnitz, now with Manes stay;
But after all my shiftings here and there,
My hat was greasy, and my coat was bare.

Then I beheld my labours past, and lo!
It all was vanity, and all was woe;
I look'd on Learning, and her garb was mean,
Her eyes were hollow, and her cheeks were lean;
Disease and Famine threaten'd in her train,
And Want, who strives to hide her rags in vain;
Her lurid brow a sprig of laurel braced,
On which was mark'd, 'Unpension'd and un-
placed.'

I turn'd to Ignorance; and lo! she sate
Enthroned beneath a canopy of state;
Before her Riches all his bags untied,
And ever and anon her wants supplied,
While, on a smiling plenitude of face,
Was clearly read, 'A pension and a place.'

ON
VISITING CARNWATH SCHOOL,
1769.

DULNESS, avaunt!—Cimmerian spectres, hence!
The surgy surface of the miry lake
Subsides, horrendous, to receive your fall,
And murky hell, unfathomably deep,
Yawns for her sable sons, with parent care!
Already, hunger-pined, with horrid yell
Reechoed by the adamantine roof
Of ancient Erebus, the' infernal hound
Expands his jaws to welcome your return—
And ah! return ye must—if enter here—
Conscious of former worth, this aged house
Contemptuous totters on its mouldering base,
Threatening destruction to the idiot crew
That with pedantic orgies shall profane
Its hallow'd bourne—where infant genius bloom'd.

Here grave Philander¹, elegantly good,
And e'en in boyish years maturely wise,
Felt kindling in his breast the' etherial flame
Prompting to generous deeds———
And with the balm of mediation heal'd
The petty discord of his quarreling mates,
Or rescued with the manly hand of power
Defenceless childhood from the scourge of age.

Here Thyrsis², ravish'd with the sweets of
To indigested numbers tuned the lyre, [sound,

¹ The Rev. James Somerville, senior minister of Stirling.

² Mr. John Inglis, master of the grammar school of Canongate, Edinburgh, and author of 'The Patriot,' a poem, printed in 1777. He died in 1786.

Gaily melodious ; while with patient charms
His light Belinda flutter'd in the lay.

Here gay Florello³, of more open front
And sweeter manners, cheer'd his crowding mates
With tale facetious, or with equal care
Set limits to the race, while rival maids
Admired the beauty of the gallant boy.

Here, O ! illustrious and lamented youth !
Aspasio⁴ ! all those lovely virtues dawn'd,
Which gain'd thee friendships in a foreign clime,
And drew compassion's tears from stranger eyes,
To see thee, all amid thy blooming hopes,
Struck immaturely from the ranks of men !

Here Damon⁵ stemm'd the estuating tide
Of boyish follies, and industrious scann'd
The feats of classic chieftains ; early warm'd
With Roman liberty and Grecian arts :
Or, variously character'd his brow,
Stalk'd indolently thoughtful, dreaming much
Of Hæmus', Pindus, and the holy hill
Of Phocis, water'd with Castalian springs.

And here Alexis⁶ trifled many an hour,
Reckless of science and the laurel'd maids,
Till, late reclaim'd by Damon's friendly care,
He turn'd the volumes fraught with ancient lore ;
And, not unfavour'd by the god of song,
To artless numbers tuned the doric reed.

³ Mr. Walter Somerville, bookseller in Lanark. He died in 1783.

⁴ Mr. John Melrose. He was bred a surgeon at South Shields, attended the medical classes of Edinburgh, and afterwards settled in Jamaica, where he died in 1766. He was eminently skilled in polite literature, medicine, botany, and natural history. Some time before his death he was employed in collecting materials for a natural history of Jamaica.

⁵ Dr. Robert Anderson of Edinburgh.

⁶ The Author.

TO

ROBERT ANDERSON, M. D.

WHILE youth yet scampers in its wild career,
 And life's mad bustle vibrates on our ear;
 While frolic's looser merriments delight,
 And delicacy yields to appetite;
 Why strives my friend, by studies too severe,
 To antedate the tyranny of care?
 To weaken principles already weak,
 The very principles by which we act?
 These bugbear passions that affright you so
 Procure us all the happiness we know;
 From their repose results the calm of life,
 But greater bliss accompanies their strife;
 And when their generous efforts you subdue,
 You only do what sager time would do:
 If war was destined for each living wight,
 Why has not nature arm'd us for the fight?
 Chastised the flowing current of our blood,
 And disengaged us from the fair and good?
 Each human heart in Stygian armour dress'd,
 And lined with triple brass each ruffian breast?
 How happy youth! if youth its bliss but knew;
 Theirs is the present, theirs the future too:
 Where'er they turn, enjoyment courts their eye,
 Enjoyment, not forbidden by the sky:
 Here, walk the fairy phantoms of the grove,
 Young friendship leaning on the arm of love;
 There, fame in air displays the gaudy crown,
 By sages, heroes, poets, patriots, won.
 Come, let us now each pleasant scene enjoy,
 Ere Age's wither'd hands their sweets destroy
 Sweep all away, and nothing leave behind
 But philosophic apathy of mind.

A A

A FIT OF THE SPLEEN.

WHAT is this creature man, who struts the world
 With so much majesty?—A frightful dream!
 A midnight goblin, and a restless ghost!
 Leaving the dismal regions of the tomb,
 To walk in darkness, and astonish night
 With hideous yellings and with piteous groans.

The radiant orbs that glitter o'er your heads,
 What are they more than lamps in sepulchres,
 That shine on dead men's bones, and point out
 death,

Misfortune, sorrow, misery, and woe,
 And all the sad innumerable ills
 That blazon the' escutcheon of mortality!
 A horror visible! than which the shades,
 The thickest midnight shades, Cimmerian glooms,
 Were clearer sunshine, and more wishful day!

The mountain's fragrance, and the meadow's
 growth,
 The vernal blossom, and the summer's flower,
 Are but funereal garlands, nature strows
 Munificent on this stupendous hearse,
 This decorated prelude to the grave:
 Insatiable monster! yawning still,
 Unfathomably deep!—A little while,
 And lo! he closes on the painted scene,
 And, surfeited with carnage, yawns no more!

Say, what is life?—this privilege to breathe?
 But a continued sigh—a lengthen'd groan—
 A felt mortality—a sense of pain—
 A present evil, still foreboding worse—
 A churchyard epitaph—a plaintive song—
 A mournful universal elegy
 We ever read, and ever read with tears!

HYMN

TO THE ETERNAL MIND.

HAIL, Source of happiness! whate'er thy name,
 Through ages' vast succession still the same;
 For ever bless'd, in giving others bliss,
 No boon thou askest of thy reptile race;
 Their virtues please thee, and their crimes offend,
 Not as a governor, but as a friend:
 What can our goodness profit thee? and say,
 Can guilt's black dye thy happiness allay,
 Raise vengeful passions in thy heavenly mind,
 Passions that e'en disgrace the humankind!
 No: are we wise? the wisdom is our own:
 And folly's miseries wait on fools alone:
 We live and breathe by thy divine command,
 Our life, our breath, are in thy holy hand;
 But something still is ours, and only ours,
 A moral nature, graced with moral powers,
 Thy perfect gift, unlimited and free,
 Without reserve of service or of fee.
 Poor were the gift if given but to bind
 In everlasting fetters all mankind!
 To bind us o'er to debts we ne'er could pay,
 And for our torment cheat us into day!
 Not thus thou dealest, sure it is not thus,
 Father beneficent! with all, with us!
 Thou form'dst our souls susceptible of bliss,
 In spite of circumstance, of time, and place;
 A bliss internal, every way our own,
 Which none can forfeit, is denied to none;

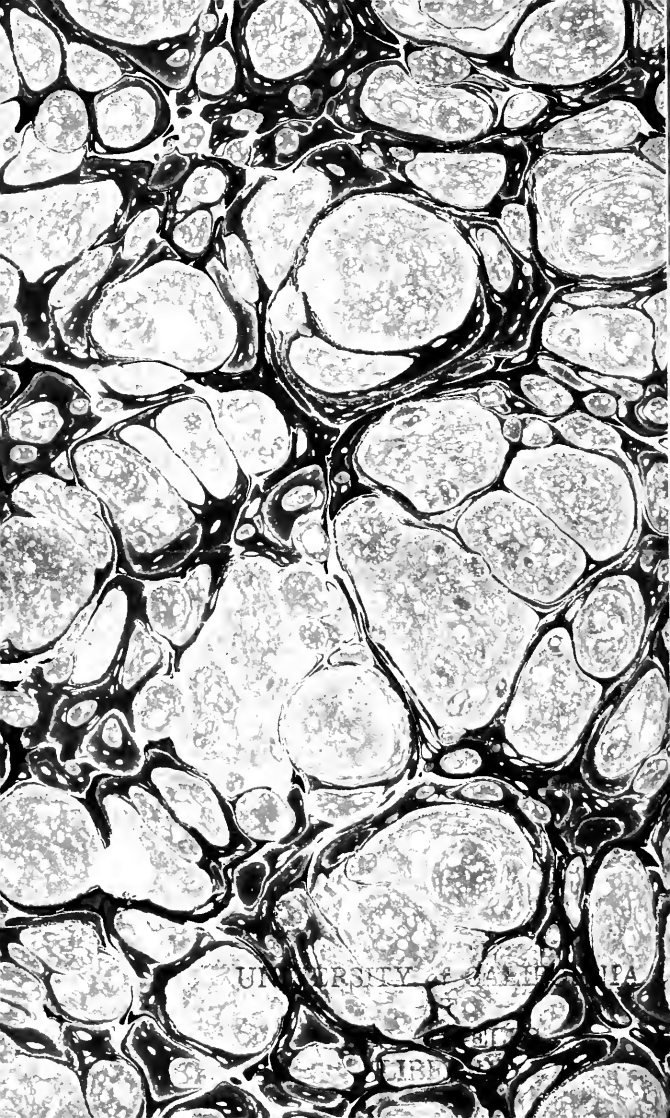
For ever forfeit; for our freedom's such,
'Tis scorn'd, or courted, still within our reach;
And if we sink to misery and woe,
Thou neither made us, nor decreed us so.
Perfection in a creature cannot dwell,
Some men have fallen, and some yet may fall;
Many the baits that tempt our steps astray,
From reason's dictates and from wisdom's way.
But, hail, Eternal Essence! ever hail!
Though vice now triumph, passion now prevail;
Though all should err, yet all are sure to find
In thee a father! and in thee a friend!
A friend, to overlook the mortal part,
The crimes, the follies foreign to the heart.

THE END.









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